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MEMOIRS

OF THE

MEXICAN REVOLUTION:

INCLUDING

A NARRATIVE OF THE EXPEDITION

OF

GENERAL XAVIER MINA.

WITH SOME OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

PRACTICABILITY OF OPENING A COMMERCE

BETWEEN

THE PACIFIC AND ATLANTIC OCEANS,

THROUGH THE MEXICAN ISTHMUS IN THE PROVINCE OF OAXACA, AND AT THE LAKE OF NICARAGUA;

AND

ON THE FUTURE IMPORTANCE OF SUCH COMMERCE

TO

THE CIVILIZED WORLD,

AND MORE ESPECIALLY TO

THE UNITED STATES.

BY WILLIAM DAVIS ROBINSON.

PHILADELPHIA:

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EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO WIT:

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the twenty-sixth day of July, (L. S.) in the forty-fifth year of the Independence of the United States of America, A. D. 1820, WILLIAM DAVIS ROBINSON, of the said District, hath deposited in this Office the Title of a Book, the right whereof he claims as Author, in the words following, *to wit:*

"Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution: including a Narrative of the Expedition of General Xavier Mina. With some observations on the practicability of opening a commerce between the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, through the Mexican Isthmus in the province of Oaxaca, and at the Lake of Nicaragua; and on the future importance of such commerce to the civilized world, and more especially to the United States. By William Davis Robinson."

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, intituled, "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned." And also to the Act, entitled, "An Act supplementary to an Act, entitled, 'An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned,' and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

D. CALDWELL, *Clerk of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.*

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INTRODUCTION.

IT is incumbent on every person who presents a statement of important events to the public, to unfold the sources from which he derives his information. The writer therefore, in the first instance, with great pleasure acknowledges his obligations to Mr. James A. Brush, a gentleman who accompanied general Mina from England to Mexico, and was finally appointed his commissary general.

The journal of Mr. Brush was submitted to the inspection of the writer, with the liberty of making such use of it as was thought proper, and from it he compiled the narrative of the military operations of general Mina, of the fidelity of which not the least doubt exists in his mind; indeed all the essential facts contained in the narrative were fully corroborated by information derived from various sources, while he was in Mexico, and by the testimony of the few surviving officers of Mina's expedition, whom he met with in Mexico and in the United States, and who were carefully consulted on the subject.

To John E. Howard, Esq., of Baltimore, he likewise feels under particular obligations, for having furnished him with the greater portion of the facts contained in the biographical sketch of Mina, and indeed for having infused into that sketch more animation than it would have been in his power alone to have given it.

The perusal of the correspondence of Mina with various distinguished individuals in Europe and the United States, from which the writer obtained important information, was politely afforded him by general Winfield Scott, to whom he likewise begs leave to offer his acknowledgments.

The writer has also examined, with much attention, files of the Mexican, Havana, and Madrid gazettes, for the last ten years, and however ridiculous or exaggerated may be their

statements of the operations of the royal forces against the patriots, one feature of the story, we may be assured, they have not too highly coloured—*the cruelties exercised by them.*

It is from such indubitable sources, and others of a similar character, which were submitted to his inspection in Mexico, and other parts of Spanish America, as well as from personal observation, that the writer has been enabled to draw the dark-hued picture of Spanish inhumanity which is exhibited in the following pages.

The information embodied in the chapter treating of the route to the Pacific ocean, has been derived from various Spanish and British authorities; among the latter, William Walton, Esq., of London, and the late celebrated Bryan Edwards, of Jamaica, deserve particular notice. Several important documents relating to this subject, written by intelligent Creoles, were likewise placed in the writer's hands; and he has frequently conversed with individuals who have visited or resided at the places which he has pointed out as being the most eligible for the cutting of canals, or the construction of roads, so as to give a rapid and certain communication between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, more especially at the Isthmus of Tehuantepec; of the practicability of accomplishing which, at that place, personal investigation has also convinced him.

As respects the general remarks on Mexico, and the situation, political and civil, of the people of Spanish America, he has endeavoured to divest himself of those prejudices which a citizen of the United States may be supposed to entertain in favour of a people struggling against oppression, and to state faithfully what came under his own personal observation, as well with regard to royalists as revolutionists.

It is now more than twenty-one years since he made his first visit to Spanish America; and as far as it has been in his power to gather information he has done so. If he could not obtain all that he desired, it arose from his having constantly to be upon his guard against the jealousies of the Spanish government, and from the difficulty of gaining access to the Spanish archives; but nevertheless, he flatters himself the

reader will find in the work now submitted to his inspection, some facts entitled to consideration, as well from their importance as novelty.

It will naturally be asked, how he gained admission into the Spanish territories in America, in contravention to the laws of the Indies? To this it is replied, that his first visit was to Caracas, in the year 1799, where he continued, in the prosecution of extensive mercantile engagements with the Spanish authorities, until the year 1806. Those engagements were with the approbation of his Catholic majesty, and consequently his residence in that country, during the time before mentioned, was under the royal sanction. The extraordinary manner in which his interests were sacrificed, and his personal rights outraged, by the bad faith and arbitrary conduct of the Spanish authorities in Caracas, will be found in a statement of his claims on the Spanish government, in the appendix to this volume, and to which he particularly refers such of his readers as may feel any curiosity to see the extent of the injuries he has suffered as a merchant, in his intercourse with the Spanish government. As respects his subsequent visits to the Spanish dominions, more especially to Mexico, he is perfectly aware that the government of Spain has said, and will continue to say, that such visits being contrary to her laws and her policy, she had a right to punish him for their infraction. She has, on several occasions during the last ten years, enforced those laws against foreigners, by imprisonment, and in some instances by death.

When the Spanish general Morillo captured Carthagena, he seized all the British and other foreign merchants, threw them into dungeons, threatened to try them by a military tribunal, and would unquestionably have shot them, had it not been for the timely interference of the British admiral on the Jamaica station, who despatched a frigate to Carthagena, with such communications from the British authorities at Jamaica, as at once settled the question, and compelled Morillo instantaneously to release all the British subjects. The American government likewise sent a vessel of war to Carthagena, and obtained the liberation of several American citizens. If these

measures had not been adopted, no mercy nor regard would have been extended to any foreigner who might unfortunately have fallen into the hands of the Spanish government, because not only by the "Leyes de las Indias" was it a capital crime for a foreigner to enter the Spanish dominions without a special authority from his Catholic majesty, but during the present revolutions in America, the Spanish government have issued various decrees, expressly declaring that all strangers aiding the insurgents, or found residing among them, were to be punished as insurgents, by death. If these decrees have not been executed by the Spanish government, it was by no means for lack of disposition, but from the apprehension of the resentment of those governments whose subjects and citizens held intercourse with the insurgents.

The writer has been thus particular in stating these facts, because they show that any individual, not engaged in the military or naval service of the insurgents of Spanish America, is under the protection of the laws of nations in favour of all non-combatants; and that any attempt on the part of Spain to infringe this security is a violation of the usages of civilized nations, and a direct outrage against that nation whose subjects may have been thus wantonly punished. It is not only on these principles that the writer feels justified in complaining of the barbarous treatment he has received from the Spanish government, during an *imprisonment of two years and a half*, but because there are some peculiar circumstances attending the affair, which, if he is not much mistaken, will excite the indignation and surprise of every unprejudiced reader.

The recital of this case has become the more necessary, because, during his imprisonment in the dungeons of Mexico, he was honoured with the sympathy of his fellow citizens, and the interference of his government in his behalf. He therefore deems it incumbent upon him to prove that he was not undeserving of such sympathy and protection. In addition to this, he is anxious to remove all doubts with regard to his conduct, that may have arisen from the misrepresentations made in the public newspapers respecting him; for in some of these he has been called *Doctor* Robinson, and in

others it has been asserted that he held a military command in the service of the Mexican insurgents, and was taken prisoner on the field of battle. The writer has not in any one instance violated his neutral obligations as a citizen of the United States. But while making this assertion, he does not at all hesitate openly to avow, that if an ardent desire to promote the independence of all Spanish America, and more especially of Mexico, constitutes him an enemy of Spain, and criminal in her eyes,—then he is guilty. If the fact of his having visited New Grenada, Caracas, and Mexico, during the political commotions of those countries, for the purpose of ascertaining their actual condition, and of succouring the revolutionists, as a neutral merchant, by all fair and honourable means, renders him an enemy to Spain,—then is he her enemy. If cherishing those sentiments, and a determination to persevere in promoting the independence of South America and Mexico, by every means in his power, consistent with his duties as a citizen of the United States, proves him to entertain criminal intentions towards the Spanish government,—then indeed is he criminal.

Having thus acknowledged all that the government of Spain can possibly lay to his charge, he now invites the attention of the reader to the following detail of facts.

On the 4th of March, 1816, he embarked at New Orleans on board the United States' brig of war Saranac, commanded by John H. Elton, Esq., bound on a cruise in the Gulf of Mexico. When he applied for a passage, he stated to the naval commander on that station, commodore Patterson, that he wished to be landed on the Mexican coast, for the purpose of having an interview with some of the Mexican authorities, on whom he had drafts for a large amount of money, due to certain merchants in the United States. His request was politely acceded to, and captain Elton received directions accordingly. The writer premises this, to show that he did not depart from the United States in an unauthorized manner, or with an illegal object in view.

On the 4th of the ensuing month, he was landed from the Saranac, at *Boquilla de Piedra*, a post then in possession of the

revolutionists, on the coast of Vera Cruz. He thence proceeded to the head-quarters of Don Guadalupe Victoria, commandant general of the patriot forces in the province of Vera Cruz, who received him in the most friendly manner. Upon his explaining the object of his visit to Mexico, general Victoria observed, that although he was unable immediately to pay the drafts on the Mexican government, yet if the writer would remain a few weeks in the country, payment should be made. He was more readily induced to wait, as he was desirous to view the interesting country in which he then was, and likewise to acquire correct information respecting the political state of affairs, in the expectation that it might be such as would justify his entering into some commercial arrangements as well with the government as with individuals. But he soon discovered that the representations made to him at New Orleans by the Mexican minister, *Don José Herrera*, and by *Don Alvarez Toledo*, were destitute of foundation, and indeed that in many points they had deceived him. However, as he received some flattering accounts of the situation of the patriots in the interior, and had a prospect of obtaining the payment of his drafts at a place called *Tehuacan*, he proceeded thither, and was received with every mark of civility by the patriot commandant, Don Manuel Mier y Teran, who accepted and paid part of the drafts, and promised to discharge the residue in a short time.

He remained at Tehuacan until the last of July, and was treated with the greatest hospitality and attention, as well by the general as by the respectable Creoles of the country. At this place he met with *Doctor John Hamilton Robinson*, who was then a brigadier general in the service of the Mexican patriots, and who had long been a very obnoxious individual to the Spanish government; a circumstance to which he owes in part his subsequent persecution by the Spanish authorities in Mexico.

The writer communicated to general Teran his desire to return to the United States; but as the royalists had recently been successful in the province of Vera Cruz, and had impeded all communication between Tehuacan and the coast, it

became impossible to return by the way of Boquilla de Piedra; and as Teran was about to undertake an expedition against the port of *Guasacualco*, at the bottom of the Mexican Gulf, on the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, he resolved to avail himself of that opportunity to leave the country. The conduct of general Teran on that expedition, and the circumstances which caused its failure, will be found detailed in Chapter V. of this work.

A few days after Teran had left Tehuacan, on his enterprise against Guasacualco, he followed with his servant, in company with a detachment of troops, who were escorting a sum of money. About sixty leagues from Tehuacan, we came up with Teran, who informed the writer that he had met with no difficulties in his route, that the few troops which the enemy usually kept in that part of the country had either fled or joined him, and that, as all the Indians were in his favour, he was confident of reaching Guasacualco in a few days. This information afforded satisfaction to the writer, because, although he was a non-combatant, he was aware that in the event of a battle, no respect would be shown by the royalists to any person who might fall into their hands.

On the morning of the 8th of September, Teran took possession of the village of *Plaïa Vicente*, situated on a branch of the river Tustepec, which the enemy had abandoned the day previous. The body of the patriot army encamped on the bank of the river opposite to the village; intending to cross the river in the evening, on rafts to be constructed for the purpose. In the meantime, the general, unapprehensive of danger, passed over to the village, with about fifteen men. The writer had accompanied him, and was regaling himself with eating pine-apples, in a garden at the extremity of the village, when a sudden discharge of musketry aroused him from his feelings of security. He immediately beheld Teran and his little party defending themselves against a considerable body of the enemy. The conflict was short. Teran, with one or two of his men, escaped to the river, and swam across, amidst a shower of balls. The rest of the party were cut to pieces.

During this perilous affair, the writer effected his retreat to a small thicket, which afforded him security for the time. He

here had ample leisure to reflect upon his situation, and the course which he should adopt to obtain ultimate safety. He conceived it possible that Teran would attack and recapture the village, in which case he might again have an opportunity of pursuing his route to Guasacualco; and continued to flatter himself with this delusive hope for *five days*, when he became so exhausted by hunger that he could scarcely move. In this wretched condition, and on the point of perishing in the woods, he determined to deliver up his person to the royalists. Accordingly, on the evening of the 12th of September, he crawled from his place of concealment, reached the road to the village, and with great difficulty walked to the head-quarters of the royalists. Being almost covered with mud, and fainting under fatigue and hunger, his appearance and situation excited the surprise and sympathy of the Spanish officers, particularly of the commander, *Ortega*, who in a friendly manner took him by the hand, and inquired his name. As soon as it was mentioned, the officers exclaimed, "Thank God! *(gracias a Dios) Doctor Robinson* has at last fallen into our hands." They wished to interrogate the writer very particularly; but he declined replying, and requested they would suspend their inquiries until the next morning, for the want of sleep and food had rendered it impossible for him at that moment to gratify their curiosity. They acceded to his wishes, and supplied him with food, a change of clothes, and a hammock in their quarters. The following morning he arose perfectly refreshed, and was prepared to go through the scene which he anticipated. He endeavoured, in the first place, to convince the commander, Ortega, that he was a different individual from *Doctor* Robinson; for which purpose he exhibited his passport from the government of the United States: but he found it impossible to remove from the minds of the Spanish officers the fixed impression that he was the Doctor. After some amicable discussion, Ortega suddenly assumed a stern aspect, and informed him that his orders were of the most peremptory nature to put to death all prisoners who fell into his hands; and that he was empowered to deviate from them only when an insurgent voluntarily surrendered his person, and

implored the benefit of his Catholic majesty's pardon, *(indulto.)* He continued, "In your case, Doctor Robinson, although your presenting yourself to the Spanish authorities has been the result of necessity, yet I am willing to spare your life, provided you claim the protection of the indulto; but otherwise, it becomes my painful duty to put you to death." At this critical moment, the eyes of all the Spanish officers were fixed on the writer, who was sensible that on his acceptance or rejection of the proposed terms depended his fate. It was answered, in the first place, that as he had not borne arms against his Catholic majesty, nor had done any act in violation of his neutral character as a citizen of the United States, having been among the insurgents as a foreigner and a non-combatant, he considered himself under the safeguard of the laws of nations, and exempt from being considered or treated as an enemy of his Catholic majesty; and secondly, that he felt a repugnance to ask for the benefit of the royal indulto, because he should thereby tacitly acknowledge himself to be an insurgent. Ortega then said, with a great deal of heat, "Sir, you have been among the insurgents, and must be treated as one; therefore, I once more tender to you the clemency of my sovereign." Perceiving that remonstrance was vain, and that obstinacy in refusing the proffered offer would inevitably lead to the threatened vengeance, the writer was induced to avail himself of the benefit of the indulto. Immediately thereupon, Ortega shook him by the hand with great cordiality, and in the presence of his officers and soldiers extended to him the indulto of his Catholic majesty. He was then permitted to walk about the village, and indeed no restraint was laid upon his person: he could therefore have easily escaped; but as he had pledged his honour not to violate the conditions of the indulto, presuming that it would be honourably fulfilled on the part of the Spanish government, he was morally withheld from thinking of such an attempt; in fact, it was not his wish to do so, particularly as he expected to be at liberty to proceed to Vera Cruz, and embark for the United States. On applying to the commander for permission to depart, he declared that it was not in his power to grant it, until he heard from the com-

mander-in-chief of the province of Oaxaca, to whom he would write on the subject.

On the 22nd of the month, the answer came from Oaxaca; but instead of the writer's request to permit him to proceed to Vera Cruz being acceded to, Ortega was ordered to send him under a strong escort to the city of Oaxaca. This measure excited his surprise, and he immediately suspected that it was the intention of the government to withdraw from him the protection of the royal indulto. On the 23d, he proceeded on his route to Oaxaca, escorted by a body of cavalry. He was furnished with a good horse, and treated with every possible kindness, but both by day and night was closely watched.

In all the villages through which he passed, he received the most hospitable attentions from the inhabitants; but when they understood that he had delivered up his person on the faith of the royal indulto, and was still treated as a prisoner, they shook their heads, and appeared to anticipate his fate. Some of these generous Creoles offered, at the hazard of their lives, to assist him in making his escape; but as he had not yet received any positive proof of the intentions of the government, he determined on his part faithfully to adhere to the conditions of the indulto.

On the evening of the 27th, he arrived at the city of Oaxaca, and was conducted to the government house, where he was presented to the commander-in-chief, Don Manuel Obesa, who received him with great kindness. He stated that it was his intention to send the writer to the city of Mexico, where *his excellency the viceroy would determine whether he was entitled to the benefit of the royal indulto, or not.* On the writer's expressing his astonishment at such a breach of good faith, general Obesa observed that it was sometimes expedient for the viceroy to withhold the benefit of the indultos that had been granted by his officers, but he hoped that in the present case it would be sacredly fulfilled. He added, that the writer must remain in Oaxaca until arrangements were made for conducting him to the city of Mexico; and that, *in order to prevent his being insulted by the populace, a cell should be fitted up for his reception in the convent of St. Domingo, and*

a strong guard be stationed there for his protection. Having thanked him for such peculiar marks of his politeness, the writer was conducted to the convent, and placed in a cell which wore the appearance of a dungeon. A soldier was stationed at the door, and another at the window. The head of the convent was a worthy friar, (Don Nicolas Medina) whose countenance indicated that he could cherish benevolent feelings even towards a heretic: his subsequent conduct, and that of all the friars of the institution, was marked with the most hospitable and generous attentions.

On the 28th, the commander, his secretary, and the intendant of the province, visited the writer, for the purpose of interrogating him, and of taking his declaration as to the motives which had induced him to visit the country. To the latter point he candidly replied by stating the facts as they have been previously narrated, but declined answering many of the interrogatories, particularly such as related to the situation and views of the insurgents. He considered many of the questions indelicate and ungenerous, more especially as he was deprived of the benefit of the royal indulto, and treated as a prisoner. The commander appeared sensible of the force of these objections, and did not press his inquiries further; but observed, that if the writer hoped to be restored to liberty, he must first give some proof of his no longer being a friend to the insurgents. After a few more remarks, tending to inspire him with confidence in the honour and clemency of the viceroy, the commander departed.

The next day, he was visited by nearly all the principal ecclesiastics of the city, who vied with the friar Medina in their friendly treatment of him, offering him money, apparel, and every thing to make his situation as comfortable as possible. The principal inhabitants of Oaxaca also honoured him with their visits; and indeed all classes of society appeared to take an interest in his situation, expressing their regret that he was not at liberty. It soon became manifest that the commander's precautions to prevent the writer from receiving insult were entirely superfluous, and that they were probably intended to hinder the populace from giving him more solid evidence of

their regard and sympathy than mere expressions of condolence.

Having been refused permission to breathe the fresh air of the convent garden, the writer became more urgent to be sent to Mexico, that he might not any longer be kept in suspense as to his fate. At length, after having been confined in the convent fourteen weeks, an order was received from the viceroy to send him under a strong guard to the capital. Accordingly, he left Oaxaca, under an escort of sixty infantry and about seventy cavalry; but after proceeding a four days' journey on the route to the city, a courier from the viceroy brought orders to conduct him back to Oaxaca, and thence to Vera Cruz. Although he was disappointed in thus being debarred an interview with the viceroy in the Mexican capital, yet he was cheered with the hope, that on his arrival at Vera Cruz, he would be permitted to depart for the United States.

On returning to the city of Oaxaca, he was placed in his old quarters in the convent; and, after the lapse of a few days, was sent, under the orders of a Spanish officer and a body of cavalry, to Vera Cruz, where he arrived on the 3d of February, 1817. On being presented to the governor, *Don José Davila*, he expressed great regret that he had instructions to *confine the writer in the fortress of San Juan de Ulua*, until further orders should be received from the viceroy. It was in vain to remonstrate against this cruel order; but nevertheless he expressed his indignation at the perfidious conduct of the viceroy in such strong terms, that governor Davila and his officers looked at him with surprise, and asked him how he dared to speak so disrespectfully of so exalted a personage as the viceroy of New Spain. After making a reply which incensed them still more, he was ordered to proceed to the fortress, and there behave with proper humility, otherwise they would take measures to punish him for his presumption. The officer who conducted him to the castle gave him a description of the barbarous character of the officer in command of the fortress, *Echaragari*, and cautioned him to beware of provoking his ire by repeating such expressions as he had used to governor Davila. The moment the writer beheld the

countenance of this officer, he needed no other evidence of the ferocious soul that beamed in its every line. The adjutant of the castle was ordered to conduct him to his allotted apartment, which was a small room, or state dungeon, under one of the arches of the ramparts.

Were the writer to give a detail of his sufferings during a confinement of eleven months in that dreadful Bastile, it would be deemed incredible by his readers, unless any of them should have had the misfortune to have experienced incarceration among the Spaniards. Even in its mildest shape, it is worse than in any other civilized nation: but when we speak of the castles of San Juan de Ulua, and of Omoa, it must be understood that there are not to be found such mansions of horror in any other part of the world. They have not only been the sepulchres of thousands, but in their horrid dungeons cruelties have been practised as dreadful as the most heart-rending scenes of the secret caverns of the Inquisition.

Had not the writer been blessed with an iron constitution, and a flow of spirits difficult to be subdued, and had he not received some benevolent succours from Don Lorenzo Murphy, of Vera Cruz, he must inevitably have perished. During an illness of several weeks, with a violent hemorrhage that daily threatened to terminate his existence, he besought his savage jailer for medical aid, and for permission to be removed to the hospital: he met with a refusal. But he forbears to dwell on this painful subject, the thoughts of which fill him with such horror and conflicting emotions, that his perturbed mind cannot collect itself sufficiently to describe it. From the sufferings of the prisoners belonging to Mina's expedition, who were confined in this infernal prison, which will be found related in the following pages, he must leave the reader to form some idea of the trials through which he had to pass.

The only consolation he experienced during his protracted imprisonment, was in a visit from lieutenant Porter, commander of the United States' brig Boxer. Arriving at Vera Cruz, in September, 1817, this officer obtained the permission of the governor to visit the writer; but so fearful were they that he might discover the miserable situation of every thing

that surrounded their prisoner, that they would not permit lieutenant Porter to enter the castle, but detained him at the landing place, whither the writer was conducted, under a guard, to the interview. It is not easy to describe his emotions, on seeing one of his own countrymen, on shaking him by the hand, and hearing from him that he had official instructions to request the Spanish authorities to release him. He then felt that he was not wholly abandoned by his country, and hoped soon to escape from the fangs of despotism. As an interpreter and other persons had been sent by the governor to be present at the interview, the conversation with lieutenant Porter was necessarily brief and cautious. The writer, however, freely expressed his indignation at the base and cruel treatment he had experienced; and requested the lieutenant, that if he did not succeed in obtaining his liberation, to demand that the Spanish authorities should at least explain their motives for thus immuring within a dungeon a citizen of the United States, without a hearing or a trial. Lieutenant Porter endeavoured to console him, by assurances of a speedy release, and by promising to repeat his visit. He also furnished him with some wine, bread, and fowls, which indeed were luxuries to one who for several months had been fed on a scanty allowance of musty beans and rice.

On the termination of the interview, he was reconducted to his miserable apartment, and there was left to indulge in those reflections that beguile the hours of the captive when a ray of hope unexpectedly breaks in upon him. For many weeks previous to the arrival of lieutenant Porter, the writer had found his health and spirits rapidly declining; and although he had endeavoured to repel the approach of despair, yet it is highly probable that that demon would have seized him, had not the prospect of deliverance at length appeared to reanimate his spirits. He not only became cheerful, but the gloomy walls within which he was enclosed were no longer viewed with horror; the voice of the surly sentinels no longer grated on his ears; and so far did he indulge in visionary hopes and calculations, that he almost ceased to remember that he was still a prisoner in the castle of San Juan de Ulua.

These illusions were soon dispelled. The visit of lieutenant Porter was not repeated; and after expecting him for twelve days, the writer was informed that he had sailed, after having been refused permission to repeat his visit. It was likewise communicated to him, that the application of lieutenant Porter for his release had proved ineffectual, the governor having answered, that he must consult the viceroy before such a step could be taken; and as it was uncertain when instructions would be received from the capital, the lieutenant concluded that it was most proper to return to the United States, to receive further instructions on the subject.

The effects of this interposition of his government, although his immediate liberation did not follow, were of high importance to the writer, not only in respect of the restoration of his health and spirits, but of the alteration of the conduct of the Spanish authorities. He became more firm and indignant in his representations to the governor of Vera Cruz and to the viceroy, the latter of whom at length resolved on sending him to Spain, to receive the decision of the king upon his case. When this information was communicated to him, about the last of December, 1817, it caused him almost as much joy as if his actual release had been announced; for he had a presentiment that if he could but get out of the castle of San Juan de Ulua, he should ultimately be freed from the clutches of Spain. So strong were his hopes in this point, that he did not permit a certain document, which had been confidentially placed in his hands, to cause him any uneasiness. This curious paper is now in his possession, and is in substance as follows:—

"*Mexico*, *May* 21, 1817.

"(SECRET AND CONFIDENTIAL.)

"*The viceroy has avowed his intention not to grant Mr. Robinson the benefit of the royal indulto, but to send him to Spain; recommending to the authorities there his close confinement for life, because he has attained such a knowledge of the actual state of the insurrection in this country, and of the real*

dispositions of the Mexican subjects, that it would be highly dangerous to his Catholic majesty's interest ever to give the said Robinson an opportunity to publish such information abroad. This communication is made to Mr. R. for the purpose of apprizing him of the viceroy's determination."

To the generous individual who at the hazard of his life made the above communication, the writer tenders his most grateful acknowledgments; and if his name be not now disclosed, the reasons for concealing it are obvious: but the period perhaps is not far distant, when the writer will be enabled with pride and pleasure to publish the name, without implicating the personal safety of him who bears it. The reader will find, in the sequel, that the recommendation of the viceroy was honoured with due attention by the king of Spain.

Early in January, 1818, the writer was embarked at Vera Cruz, on board his Catholic majesty's frigate Iphigenia, destined for Spain. The commander of the ship did him the favour to separate him from the rest of the unfortunate prisoners on board, and allotted him a place in the gun-room, with the officers. He was likewise furnished with food from the commander's table, and allowed to walk on the quarter-deck. For these attentions he shall ever feel grateful, as they emanated solely from principles of humanity.

A few days after sailing from Vera Cruz, they encountered violent gales of wind; the frigate sprung a leak, and was compelled to bear away for Campeachy. So serious was the leak, that time was scarcely afforded to land the crew, and about two millions of dollars, before the vessel sunk at her anchorage. The writer was conducted to tolerably comfortable quarters, and placed under a strong guard. He was there confined for *five months:* but as the pleasures and miseries of life are frequently augmented or diminished by our own comparisons, he consoled himself with contrasting his imprisonment at Campeachy with his sufferings at Vera Cruz; and, with the aid of this reflection, passed the time cheerfully and in good health. The hospitable attentions he received from

several distinguished inhabitants of Campeachy will never be forgotten, and he shall feel the highest satisfaction should it ever be in his power to give them proofs of his gratitude.

From Campeachy he was taken to Havana, in the Spanish sloop of war *San Francisco*. On his arrival there, he was conducted to the common jail, but was soon removed to the Moro castle, and placed in the most secure dungeon (calaboso) in the fortress. It was however spacious, and far superior to his quarters at San Juan de Ulua. The commander had very strict orders from the captain general respecting him, and was made responsible for the security of his person. He rigidly executed his orders, but his conduct generally was kind, and his amiable family honoured the writer with the most friendly attentions. The American citizens residing at Havana also treated him in the most generous manner, and, by furnishing him with the means of living comfortably, caused him to become a favourite with the officers on duty at the fortress, who generally made his dungeon their head-quarters. He remained in the Moro castle for nearly *six months*, making occasional remonstrances to the captain general in a tone that displeased his excellency, at the same time that they convinced him of the injustice of his government; and, in an interview with which the writer was honoured, at the castle, in December, 1818, he succeeded in obtaining permission to breathe the fresh air on the ramparts.

On the 13th of January, 1819, he was again embarked on board the Spanish brig of war *Ligero*, commanded by *Don Juan José Martinez*, destined for Cadiz. This worthy officer performed towards him, during the passage, every duty of generosity and humanity. He was frequently invited to the captain's table, treated in the most friendly manner, and was so fortunate as to gain his esteem. On their arrival at Cadiz, on the 21st of February, he was represented by that worthy man in so favourable a light to general O'Donnel, the governor of that city, that when orders were sent on board the vessel for the removal on shore of the prisoners, of whom there were several beside himself, the writer was excepted, the adju-

tant of the governor informing him that he was at liberty to proceed to whatever quarter of the city he thought proper. This was cheering intelligence, inducing him to believe that his persecutions had reached their termination.

Accordingly, on the morning of the 22d, he landed, and proceeded to the house of Mr. Tunis, the American consul, who showed much satisfaction and surprise at his being at liberty. He went to a hotel, and passed the evening in reflecting on this unexpected good fortune. He had not the least suspicion of the reverse that was about to take place; for, had he not felt assured of perfect security from further molestation, he would undoubtedly have effected a precipitate departure; but, confiding in his innocence, and flattering himself that he should have an opportunity of obtaining redress at Madrid for his recent sufferings, he anticipated no ill.

He retired early to rest, but was roused from sleep, about eleven o'clock at night, by a loud knocking at his door; and on opening it, he was requested by a Spanish officer to dress himself speedily, and accompany him. He was then conducted to a guard-house, where he was left to himself the remainder of the night, to ponder the sudden alteration in the aspect of his affairs. The next day, he was taken to the castle of San Sebastian, and given in charge to the commandant.

This sudden change in the conduct of the governor was thus explained. It appeared that he had forgotten a certain royal order, bearing date the 15th of October, 1818, which commanded him, immediately on the arrival of the writer at Cadiz, *to send him to Ceuta, there to be confined in the citadel, without communication with any of the other prisoners in that fortress*. But the governor's secretary, or some other of the persons employed about him, reminded him of the order, which occasioned the renewed imprisonment of the writer.

To be sent to Ceuta, and there confined in the citadel, without a hearing, convinced him that his Catholic majesty was determined to conform to the advice of the viceroy of New Spain. He had written, on the day of his arrival at Cadiz, to the minister of the United States at Madrid, requesting

his interference and protection; and as he was uncertain what would be the result of this application, his first object was to endeavour to prevent his removal to Ceuta, until he should hear from Madrid; for he was sensible that if he once reached the former place, his liberation from it would be very doubtful. He therefore requested the American consul to interpose his good offices, to acquaint the governor that the American minister had instructions from his government to demand the release of the writer, and to suggest to him the propriety of not removing him from Cadiz until his Catholic majesty's pleasure should be known. The governor politely listened to these representations; and the writer's apprehensions of being precipitately hurried off to Ceuta, were thus allayed.

On the 25th of February, he addressed a letter to general O'Donnel, complaining in strong terms of the government of Spain, and begging that he would grant him the liberty of the city on his parole of honour, until intelligence should arrive from Madrid of the result of the American minister's application in his behalf. On the 28th, he was conducted to the government house, to have an interview with the general, who received him with great affability. His secretaries and clerks having withdrawn, the general entered into a frank conversation with him, relative to the affairs of Mexico, as well as to his own peculiar situation. The countenance and manners of general O'Donnel inspired him with confidence; and he was so fortunate as to create in the general a lively impression in his favour. After a short conversation, general O'Donnel called in his adjutant, and ordered him to accompany the writer to the castle of San Sebastian, with directions to the commander to permit him to leave it whenever he thought proper, and to reside in the city on his parole, until his Catholic majesty should otherwise determine.

On the 4th of March, the writer received from the American minister the following letter:—

"*Madrid, February* 27, 1819.

"Sir,—

"Your letter of 21st instant, which should have reached me on the 25th, was not delivered till the 26th. I have this day

written to the first minister of state, (marquis of Casa Yrujo,) demanding, in pursuance of the orders of my government, long since received, your immediate release.

"I have sent to that minister the statement of your case contained in your letter of June 4th, 1817, to the secretary of state of the United States, and have added in my note to the minister such other circumstances, drawn from your letter to me, as I thought might be useful. I have called to the recollection of the marquis his correspondence with the intendant of Venezuela, the better to distinguish you from Doctor John Hamilton Robinson; adding my personal knowledge of you, in London, in the character of a merchant, (in the year 1801,) occupied, if I mistake not, in the affairs of your tobacco contract. At the suggestion of your friend Mr. Meade, I have also referred to Mr. Cagigal, formerly captain general of Venezuela, and now resident at Santa Maria, near Cadiz, for information relating to your operations in that province during his administration, &c. &c.

"Upon the whole, I hope that this representation may be attended with success; but whatever may result from it, you shall be immediately informed.

"With much esteem, Sir,

"I am your obedient servant,

"GEORGE W. ERVING.

"*Mr. William D. Robinson.*"

The receipt of Mr. Erving's letter inspired the writer with that confidence which a citizen of his country must ever feel, when he finds himself under the protection of his government. But on the evening of the 14th of March, an important circumstance occurred, which worked a total revolution in his affairs, and produced a corresponding change in his course of conduct. He was confidentially informed, that the governor of Cadiz had received, by a courier which arrived from Madrid that evening, *a severe reprimand for having granted him the liberty of the city of Cadiz, and was directed immediately to secure his person, place him in the castle of San Sebastian, and thence send him in a vessel of war to*

Ceuta, to be confined in the citadel, conformably to his Catholic majesty's order of the 15th of October, 1818. As the source whence this information was derived left no doubt of its correctness, the writer knew that if he did not take some precautionary steps, he should be arrested in a few hours. The emergency called for promptness of decision. He reflected, on the one hand, that he was bound by the laws of honour not to violate the parole which he had given to general O'Donnel: but on the other, he considered that the Spanish government was about to make him a victim of its perfidy and injustice. He knew that the issuing of an order for his imprisonment at Ceuta, after the American minister had made a formal application for his release, was an unequivocal proof of a deliberate intention to sacrifice him, by confinement in a place where he should even be deprived of the means of making a remonstrance, and whence he could never expect to be freed unless his government should adopt measures of the strongest kind; and that, until such measures were adopted, he should be exposed to all the severities and dangers of Spanish incarceration. The horrors he had experienced in the castle of San Juan de Ulua were still fresh in his memory.

Under all these circumstances, he determined on making an attempt to effect his escape; but as the gates of the city were then closed, it was necessary to wait until the next morning. He departed from his lodgings about eight o'clock at night; and in about an hour afterwards, the adjutant of the governor was sent to arrest him, but on finding him absent, left a polite message, that general O'Donnel wished to see him. The following morning, he received information that a general search was making for him, and that it would be difficult to elude the vigilance of the guards posted at the gates. But these unpropitious circumstances did not deter him from his resolution, for a miscarriage could add but little to his misfortunes.

It would perhaps be improper here to describe the mode of his escape, lest some of his friends or acquaintances might fall under the suspicion of having been accessary to it. He deems it necessary, however, to remark, that although several indi-

viduals in Cadiz knew of his intentions to escape, yet he did not implicate any one of them in the act.

On the afternoon of the 15th of March, he succeeded in passing the gates of the city; and the same evening, was outside of the harbour, on board a vessel bearing the flag of his country. On the 19th, he reached Gibraltar, where he was received with every mark of friendship and hospitality, by Bernard Henry, Esq., American consul, Richard M'Call, navy agent of the United States, Horatio Sprague, Richard Gatewood, Hill & Blodget, and by several other gentlemen; to all of whom he begs leave to offer his sincere acknowledgments.

A few days after his arrival at Gibraltar, a demand for his person was made by the Spanish government upon the governor of that fortress. It is almost needless to say, that such a demand was looked upon as an absurdity.

No longer under any apprehensions of falling again into the power of the Spaniards, and reflecting on the misrepresentations that would probably be made respecting his conduct, and being desirous of manifesting to the Spanish government, as well as to his own, that although his departure from Cadiz was perfectly justifiable, yet he was still willing to submit to a fair and impartial investigation of his conduct, provided that a guarantee were given that he should not suffer any new personal outrages, he addressed the following letter:—

"*Gibraltar*, *March* 25, 1819.

"SIR,—

"For your excellency's information, I beg leave to enclose copies of my letters to the conde de Abisbal, governor of Cadiz, and to the marquis Casa Yrujo, first minister of state.

"I beg your excellency will pursue such measures as in your judgment may be necessary, under existing circumstances, as well to sustain my honour as interests.

"I shall be entirely guided by, and hope to be honoured with, your advice; and have only to observe, that if there should arise the least demur on the part of the Spanish government to give a formal and solemn assurance that neither

my person nor rights shall be subject to further outrages, I mean in such case to make my arrangements for an early departure for the United States. I am without any of your excellency's communications since your letter of the 12th inst.

"I remain, respectfully, your obedient servant,

"William D. Robinson.

"*To his Excellency George W. Erving,*
Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States at Madrid."

Under the same date, he wrote a letter to the conde de Abisbal, of which the following are extracts:—

"Sir,—

"I am well aware that your excellency may reproach me, for having violated my word of honour, in having left Cadiz without your consent; but I beg leave to state the following circumstances, which I flatter myself will be a complete justification of that step, and showing at the same time that it became imperiously necessary for me to adopt it.

"In the first place, my advices from Madrid, of the 9th instant, informed me that no answer had been given by the marquis Casa Yrujo to the demand for my release made by the minister of the United States at Madrid, on the 26th ult. A silence of twelve days, on such a point, not only appeared to me to be at variance with the principles of national courtesy, but very clearly indicated an indisposition on the part of the marquis or his government to comply with the demand in question.

"Secondly: I had indubitable information that there existed, in your excellency's possession, *an order of his Catholic majesty, dated October* 15, 1818, *directing, that on my arrival at Cadiz, I was to be sent to Ceuta, and there rigorously confined in the citadel.* When I reflected that the Chevalier Onis, minister plenipotentiary of Spain in the United States, had given to my government a solemn promise, that on my arrival in Spain, I should enjoy a liberal and impartial hearing, at Madrid, against any charges which the viceroy of New Spain may have adduced against me, and that, instead of such pro-

mise being honourably fulfilled, his Catholic majesty had issued so unjust and recent an order as the one before mentioned, it was obvious to my mind that the Spanish government had a premeditated intention to sacrifice me.

" Thirdly: on the 14th instant, at night, I obtained the most unequivocal information that your excellency had received certain *secret orders from Madrid, again to arrest me, and to place me in security in the castle of San Sebastian, until an opportunity offered to send me to Ceuta.*

" Fourthly: on the night of the 14th, and on the morning of the 15th, I discovered that your excellency had adopted very active steps to get possession of my person, doubtless for the purpose of carrying into effect your orders from Madrid.

" The preceding four points embrace matters of a very delicate nature, and show the imperious necessity of the course I have adopted. ********

" Thirty months' imprisonment, in castles, jails, dungeons, and convents, without a hearing, or even the shadow of a legal trial, had taught me a bitter and serious lesson, and authorized me to suppose that the dungeons of Ceuta might close my mortal career.

" We know that the sultans of the Ottoman empire, in the plenitude of their sublime functions, occasionally decapitate their vassals, and afterwards order the divan of Constantinople to examine and decide on the guilt or innocence of the victim. God forbid, that Turkish usages should become the *order of the day* in any part of the Christian world; but I presume your excellency will coincide with me in opinion, that there is no essential difference between imprisoning an individual for an indefinite period, without a hearing or trial, and taking off his head according to the usages of the Turks.

" I trust your excellency will find in the preceding reflections an ample apology, if not a justification, of the step which I have taken. I shall always bear a grateful recollection of your excellency's very liberal conduct towards me, at Cadiz, and I flatter myself, that neither your conscience nor reputation will ever suffer, from your having manifested a repugnance to be the subordinate instrument of executing decrees,

unjust and barbarous, and marked by a spirit of anticivilization in all their features.

"I beg leave to enclose a copy of my letter of this date to the marquis Casa Yrujo, for your information, and have the honour to be, with great respect,

"Your excellency's obedient servant,

"WILLIAM D. ROBINSON.

"*To his Excellency the Conde de Abisbal,*
Captain general of Andalusia, Governor of Cadiz, &c. &c."

"*Gibraltar, March* 25, 1820.

"SIR,—

"It has been represented to me that your excellency, in your public and private character, has developed a strong antipathy towards the government and citizens of the United States, but when I reflect on your excellency's distinguished talents and acquirements, on the long course of your diplomatic career, and on your having mixed so much in the civilized world, I can scarcely think it possible, that the imputation before suggested is correct. It will afford me much pleasure to find it unjust.

"I have now the honour to enclose for your excellency's information, a copy of my letter to the governor of Cadiz, in justification of my having departed from that city without his consent. I have sent a copy of the same to the American minister, and shall send another to the government of the United States.

"I feel most particularly anxious, sir, to be allowed a public opportunity to vindicate my conduct and character against any charges which the viceroy of New Spain may have unjustly and illiberally adduced against me, and I wish to have an opportunity of proving how very often the viceroys, captain generals, and other authorities in Spanish America, make Olympian mountains out of molehills.

"I am desirous, sir, of convincing the Spanish government, as well as my own, that I have been most unjustly persecuted and cruelly treated; and I likewise desire to prove, that I

have rendered most important services to your government, which terminated in my ruin, in the years 1804 and 1805, and that I have now the most indisputable claims on your government for *more than half a million of dollars*. To attain those objects it is only necessary for me to have a liberal and impartial hearing.

"If I have committed any errors, I will submit to make a corresponding atonement. I do not supplicate favours or indulgences. I demand a rigid scrutiny into my conduct; but I must require such scrutiny to be made with a due regard to my person and rights, as a citizen of the United States.

"Under these circumstances, sir, I solicit his Catholic majesty to grant me a fair and liberal hearing; and that he will condescend to give a solemn assurance to the minister of the United States at Madrid, that I shall not suffer any further acts of personal violence or outrage, on the part of the Spanish government.

"If such assurance is given with the solemnity suggested, I will not hesitate a moment in returning to Spain; but if, from any motives whatsoever, such assurance is withheld, I will in such case enter my solemn protest against all whom it may concern, and indulge hopes of obtaining eventual redress, through the intervention of my own government.

"I have the honour to be, with due respect,

"Your excellency's obedient humble servant,

"WILLIAM D. ROBINSON.

"*To his Excellency the Marquis Casa Yrujo,*
First Minister of State, &c. &c."

The Spanish minister, immediately on the receipt of the preceding communications, addressed the following note to the American minister:—

TRANSLATION.

"SIR,—

"I have the honour to send you herewith, copies of a letter to me, and of one to the captain general of Andalusia, written from Gibraltar, by William Davis Robinson, a citizen of the United States. By them your excellency will perceive, that,

violating his parole of honour, he has fled from Cadiz, in which place he had been permitted to reside under arrest. Your excellency will likewise perceive the motives which he alleges, for having taken this determination, which he pretends to justify; and that he asks permission to come to this court, to defend himself against the charges which the viceroy of New Spain may have adduced against him; but, for the security of his person, solicits that there shall be given to your excellency, the most complete assurances that he shall not suffer any oppression or violence whatsoever. His majesty, whom I have acquainted with these circumstances, and who desires to administer strict and impartial justice in his dominions, has been pleased to decide on granting a safe conduct (salvo conducto) to the said citizen, to enable him, as he offers, to come to this capital, to justify himself before a competent tribunal, who will investigate and judge his conduct conformably to our laws, administered with all justice and impartiality; *but on the indispensable condition, that the said Mr. Robinson is to remain subject to the effects of the sentence.* His majesty hopes, that in this step will be immediately recognised the rectitude which characterizes his government, and that the president of the United States, as well as your excellency, will see in this measure a new proof of the consideration with which the citizens of the United States are treated in Spain.

"I renew to your excellency my respects, and pray God to preserve your life many years. At the Palace, 2d of April, 1819.

(Signed.) "MARQUIS DE CASA YRUJO.

"*To the Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States of America.*"

The preceding document, although couched in very polite diplomatic language, was by no means satisfactory to the American minister. He naturally felt some degree of mortification, at the inattention which had so recently been manifested by the Spanish government to the formal application

he had made for the writer's release, and when he reflected that at the very moment the marquis Casa Yrujo had been amusing him with a promise that the writer's case should be investigated, the said marquis had sent a secret order to the governor of Cadiz, to arrest and send him to Ceuta, it was impossible for the American minister to place any confidence in a government that acted with so much bad faith; he therefore declined accepting the guarantee for the writer's personal safety, offered in the marquis's note, and replied accordingly.

From the tenor of Mr. Erving's communications to the writer on this subject, he was perfectly satisfied of the correctness of the course Mr. Erving had adopted, and indeed he feels great pleasure in acknowledging his obligations to that gentleman, for his official and friendly conduct towards him. His last letter on the subject is as follows:—

"*Madrid, April* 19, 1819.

"SIR,—

"Your letter of April 12th is just received. I am glad to learn that the explanation contained in my last letter was satisfactory to you; as in no view of the case could I find a motive for encouraging your coming to Spain, neither could I make myself the medium of offering you the encouragement proposed by this government. As you desire to have a copy of Mr. Yrujo's note, referred to in my last, it is herewith enclosed. I must, however, observe, that if I could think it proper to intervene in the proposed arrangement, I should require stipulations rather more precise than what are contained in Mr. Yrujo's note. With much esteem, I am, sir,

"Your obedient servant,

(Signed.) "GEORGE W. ERVING.

"P. S. I must further inform you, that Mr. Yrujo, in his second note on your case, after mentioning *the importance of the charges against you*, says, that his majesty would order his minister at Washington to lay before the president *his reasons for not acquiescing in the president's demand.* This you will conclude *was intended to preclude all further remonstrance*

on my part, whilst you were in prison under trial, or after sentence had been passed on you. G. W. E.

"*To Mr. William Davis Robinson.*"

The writer has been more prolix in this detail than he otherwise would have been, because the Spanish government has complained to the government of the United States on the point of his having broken his parole at Cadiz, and because he feels desirous of convincing his fellow citizens, as well as every impartial reader, that such a step was perfectly justifiable; and as regards his refusal to return to Spain, he would fain believe that his correspondence with the minister of the United States completely elucidates that point, and shows that it would have been an act of more than common folly to have visited Madrid under the guarantee and on the conditions expressed in the marquis Casa Yrujo's note to Mr. Erving. But, exclusive of the official communications with which he was honoured in this matter, he has other documents in his possession, which prove that in case of his return to Spain, it was the marquis's intention, as well as that of his government, to have spared no means to effect his destruction. The writer forbears to publish the documents alluded to, at this time, as they would swell the present volume too much, and perhaps trespass on the patience of the reader. Enough has already been said, to show that if any of his opinions, expressed in the following pages, be tinctured with enmity towards the late government of Spain, he has had sufficient cause to excite his animosity and disgust. He does not hesitate to declare, that while he respects the individual character of the Spaniard in Europe, yet he views with abhorrence his conduct towards the American Creole and Indian, and feels not the least commiseration for his loss of power and influence in the New World; and, if he mistake not, the facts developed in the course of this work will demonstrate that the sun of Spanish power in the west is about to descend for ever below the horizon.

The writer is aware that he who records events of such deep importance to the civilized world, ought to be gifted with ta-

lents, and possess acquirements, infinitely beyond those which have fallen to his lot, and that consequently he may be accused of presumption in touching on subjects which even sages and scholars would find it difficult to illustrate properly: but, in extenuation of all his literary faults, he begs the reader to bear in mind that an individual, compelled by misfortune and Spanish treachery to seek a subsistence for the last fourteen years by his own enterprise, cannot have enjoyed much time for the cultivation of letters. Making, therefore, no pretensions to the honours of *an author*, he submits his work to the candid criticisms of his fellow citizens. He can regard with frigid indifference the harshest judgments of European censors; but, tremblingly alive to the favourable opinion of his own countrymen, he requests them to look upon the work as the production of one who, never possessing learned leisure, was engaged in the honourable occupation of an American merchant.

Philadelphia, October 20, 1820.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I. *Summary account of the Conquest—Humane enactments of Charles V.—Grievances of the Americans—Loyalty displayed by them, on receipt of the intelligence of the difficulties in Spain, in* 1808—*Politic course of conduct, proposed to be adopted, in this emergency, by the viceroy Iturrigaray—His deposition by a faction of Europeans—Arrival of his successor, Vanegas—Plot entered into, to overthrow the Spanish government in Mexico—Breaking out of the Revolution, at the town of Dolores, under the direction of Hidalgo—Capture of the city of Guanaxuato—Proclamations of the Viceroy, and fulminations of the Church—Action at Las Cruces—Conduct of Hidalgo—Battle of Aculco—Massacre at Guanaxuato, by Calleja—Battle of the Bridge of Calderon—Capture of Hidalgo—Death of that patriot, and many other officers.* - 1

CHAP. II. *State of the Revolution, after the death of Hidalgo—General Don José Maria Morelos—Capture of Oaxaca and Acapulco—Formation of a Congress and Constitution—Manifesto of the Junta of Zultepec—Defeat at Valladolid—General Matamoros taken prisoner, and shot—Capture of Morelos, at Tepecuacuilco—His death—Arrival of the Congress at Tehuacan—General observations.* - - - - - - - 26

CHAP. III. *General Mina—His early life, and career in Spain—His motives for embarking in the cause of Mexico—Arrival at, and transactions in, Baltimore—Departure of the expedition—Occurrences at Port au Prince—Arrival of the expedition at Galvezton—Treachery of Correa—Departure of the expedition from Galvezton, and its arrival off the bar of the river Santander—Disembarcation of the division.* - 43

CHAP. IV. *Soto la Marina occupied by Mina—General arrangements there—Action of colonel Perry with Don Felipe La Garza—Continuation of events in Soto la Marina—Capture of the Cleopatra, by the Spanish frigate La Sabina—Dastardly conduct of the officers of that expedition—Line of march taken up for the interior—A succession of events—Action at, and capture of, the town of El Valle de Mais—Occurrences at that place, and departure therefrom—Battle of Peotillos—Sanguinary decrees of the enemy—Conduct of the priest of Hideonda, and remarks thereon—Mina's progress—Attack and taking of Sierra de Pinos—Departure therefrom—Junction with the Patriots—Arrival at the Patriot fortress of Sombrero—Its description.* 81

CHAP. V. *Reflections on the state of the Revolution, after the dispersion of the Congress—General Don Manuel Mier y Teran—His talent and enterprise—His fall—General Don Guadalupe Victoria—General Osourno—General Don Ignacio Raïjon—General Don José Antonio Torres—Degraded state of the Patriots, after he assumed the command—Reflections thereon.* - - - - - - - - - 123

CHAP. VI. *Action of San Juan de los Llanos—Capture of the Jaral—Interview, at Sombrero, between general Mina and some of the revolutionary chiefs—Overture by Mina for an exchange of prisoners—Events in Sombrero.* - - - - - - - 145

CHAP. VII. *Intelligence of the fall of Soto la Marina received at Sombrero—Investissement of the fort by Arredondo—Operations during the siege—Desertion of La Sala—His base conduct—Gallant defence of the garrison—Its capitulation—The terms—Their violation—Cruel treatment experienced by the captives, in Altamira, on the road to Vera Cruz, and in the dungeons of San Juan de Ulua—Departure of some of the captives for Spain—Order of the minister of war at Madrid—Strictures on the violation of the capitulation,*

and on the decree of the Cortes, of the 10th of April, 1813—Violation of Miranda's capitulation at Caracas —The consequences thereof—Cruelty of the Spaniards in Puerto Cavello—Dreadful measures of retaliation adopted by general Bolivar. - - - - - 169

CHAP. VIII. *Situation of the city of Mexico, and the measures of the viceroy—Failure of the expedition of Mina against the Villa de Leon—Arrival of the army under Don Pasqual Liñan, before Sombrero—Forms his line of circumvallation—Situation of the fort—Commencement of active operations—Detail of events —Sortie on the encampment of Don Pedro Celestino Negrete—Sally of general Mina—Detail of events— Gallant defence of the fort, on the 18th of August— Evacuation of the fort—Massacre of the fugitives, of the wounded, and of the prisoners—Memoir of Don Pasqual Liñan.* - - - - - - - 189

CHAP. IX. *General Mina proceeds to the fort of Los Remedios—Arrival of some of the fugitives there from Sombrero—Description of the fort of Los Remedios, or San Gregorio—Advance of Liñan against the fort— Mina marches out, with nine hundred men—Description of these troops—A reflection of great importance to the United States—Meeting of the general with the remnant of his division, near the Tlachiquera—Siege laid to Los Remedios—Mina advances against, and takes, Biscocho—Execution of the garrison—Advance against, and capture of, San Luis de la Paz—Clemency of Mina towards the garrison—Attack on San Miguel —Retreat therefrom, and arrival at the Valle de Santiago—A description of it—Continuation of events connected with Mina's movements—Disgraceful conduct of Padre Torres—Continuation of events at the fort— Repulse of the enemy—Sortie on one of his batteries— Mina's operations continued—Flight of the Patriots from the field at La Caxa—Mina visits Xauxilla, and thence proceeds to the Valle de Santiago—Skirmish with Orrantia, and Mina's arrival at La Caxa.* - 210

CHAP. X. *Mina advances against Guanaxuato—Description of that city—He attacks it—Failure—He proceeds with an escort to the rancho del Venadito—Movements of Orrantia—Mina made prisoner—Brutal conduct of Orrantia towards him—Death of Mina—Reflections—State of society in Mexico—Remarks on the present state of the royal forces, and the facility with which the country could be invaded, and its emancipation accomplished.* - - - - - 243

CHAP. XI. *Assault of Los Remedios, on the 16th of November, and repulse of the enemy—Sortie by the garrison on the enemy's intrenchments—Cause which led to the evacuation of the fort—Los Remedios evacuated, on the night of the 1st of January, 1818—Barbarities of the royalists there—Operations of the contending parties, after the reduction of Los Remedios—Loss of Xauxilla—Detailed account of the subsequent events of the Revolution, and its actual state in the month of July, 1819—Reflections.* - - - 277

CHAP. XII. *Cruelty a predominant feature in Spanish history; exemplified by a brief view of the conduct of Spain in Europe, and by the horrors committed, by her authorities, in Mexico and South America, since the year 1810—Reflections.* - - - - 309

CHAP. XIII. *Examination of the different routes to the Pacific Ocean—Doubts respecting a passage to the north-west—The communication between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, at the province of Choco, examined—Observations upon the routes by the Isthmus of Darien or Panama; by the Isthmus of Costa Rica; and by that of Oaxaca—General observations on the importance of this passage to the civilized world in general, and to the United States in particular.* - - 339

APPENDIX. *Statement of the claims of W. D. Robinson upon the Spanish government.* - - - 379

MEMOIRS

OF

THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION.

CHAPTER I.

Summary account of the Conquest—Humane enactments of Charles V.—Grievances of the Americans—Loyalty displayed by them, on receipt of the intelligence of the difficulties in Spain, in 1808*—Politic course of conduct, proposed to be adopted, in this emergency, by the Viceroy Iturrigarai—His deposition by a faction of Europeans—Arrival of his successor, Vanegas—Plot entered into to overthrow the Spanish government in Mexico—Breaking out of the Revolution, at the town of Dolores, under the direction of Hidalgo—Capture of the city of Guanaxauto—Proclamations of the Viceroy, and fulminations of the Church—Action at Las Cruces—Conduct of Hidalgo—Battle of Aculco—Massacre at Guanaxauto, by Calleja—Battle of the Bridge of Calderon—Capture of Hidalgo—Death of that patriot, and many other officers.*

TO elucidate the causes which gave birth to the present struggles of Spanish America generally, but particularly of that section of which we now treat, against the despotism of old Spain, it is necessary to take a retrospect of its situation, from the period of the conquest. It will then appear evident to every impartial mind, that almost each revolving hour, for the last three centuries, has been marked by a steady, systematic course of injustice and outrage towards the unfortunate Americans.

The conquest of Mexico was undertaken by Cortez, in conformity with a plan which had been prescribed to Columbus by the Spanish crown; by which it was provided, that the expense attending the discovery and conquest of any unknown countries, should be altogether borne by the adventurers, who should, as a compensation, retain the vassalage of the nations, upon the condition that they should be instructed by them in the precepts of the Christian religion. The dominion of all such countries as should be discovered, was to be vested in the crown of Spain, which, on its part, guarantied (*Leyes de las Indias*, *Ley I. tit.* 1, *lib.* 3.) that "on no account should they be separated, wholly or in part, from that monarchy:" and the emperor Charles V. binds himself and successors for ever, that "these settlements should on no account, or in favour of any one, either wholly or in part, be separated;" and that "if, in violation of this stipulation, any of his successors should make any gift or alienation, either wholly or in part, the same shall be void."

Cortez, in pursuance of these favourable enactments, proceeded from the island of Cuba, the 10th of February, 1519, to the work of conquest. After sailing along, and making descents on the coast of Yucatan, he landed on the spot where the castle of San Juan de Ulua now stands, the 21st of April; and, after meeting with various vicissitudes of fortune, and displaying the courage and ferocity of the Spaniards of those times, he succeeded, on the 8th of November, in planting the Spanish banners on the capital of the Mexican empire.

The chief of that empire lavished upon Cortez every mark of respect and hospitality; but was soon made to feel the effects of Spanish artifice and treachery. Montezuma was entrapped, and kept a prisoner by Cortez six months. At length he was shot by an arrow, while endeavouring to quell a tumult among his own subjects. They were anxious to avenge his wrongs, and to revenge the treacherous massacre of their nobles, on the 13th of May, 1520. This unfeeling outrage was committed by Alvarado, who had been left in the command of the city, during the absence of Cortez, when marching upon Zempoalla, to attack his rival Narvaez. Montezuma died, frantic with mortifi-

cation and despair, about the 30th of June, in the quarters of the Spaniards, where he had been kept prisoner by Cortez. This event so much excited the rage of the Mexicans, that Cortez found it impossible to maintain his position in the city; and it became expedient for him to abandon it, and to fall back on his allies the Tlascalans. This movement was accomplished on the night of the 1st of July, but with a severe loss. The friendship of the Tlascalans remained unaltered by the change of Cortez's fortune; and they offered him every assistance he should require, to enable him to continue his operations against their enemies, the Mexicans. Cortez, having augmented the Europeans by the soldiers of the conquered Narvaez, and reenforcements from the Antilles, returned to and entered Tezcuco, the 31st of December; and, on the 31st of May, 1521, laid siege to the city of Mexico, with eighty-seven cavalry, eight hundred and forty-eight Spanish infantry, eighteen pieces of artillery, *seventy-five thousand Tlascalans*, and thirteen small vessels, which he had built on the lake.

The Mexicans, under Quauhtemotzin, the successor of the unfortunate Montezuma, defended themselves with desperate valour; and, after a resistance of seventy-five days, during which time they had to contend against the ravages of famine and disease, and an enemy who had increased in force to upwards of two hundred thousand men, Mexico was taken by Cortez, the 13th of August, but not until the greater part of that beautiful city had been destroyed.

The emperor, endeavouring to escape, in a canoe, from the fury of the Spaniards, was taken prisoner. The sanguinary Cortez crowned the dreadful cruelties which had sullied all the steps of his conquest, by torturing the emperor in a manner the most diabolical. With a view of extorting from the unfortunate monarch a confession of the place where his treasures were concealed, he first soaked his feet in oil, and afterwards burnt them by a slow fire. Cortez, finding that the torture was borne with firmness by the noble Mexican, ordered him to be released; but he, together with two other kings, were hung, three years afterwards, on the allegation of an intent to revolt.

The natives of the country continued, for some time, to resist the strides of the conqueror, but eventually fell victims to their inferiority in arms. A devastation ensued, by fire and sword, that has no parallel in history. The unoffending aborigines were slaughtered, without mercy or distinction. To the Spanish historians of those days, we refer the reader, who feels desirous of perusing the accounts of those cruelties in detail: he will there behold narrated only a part of the bloody scenes, —but sufficient to cover the Spanish name with eternal opprobrium.

After Cortez felt himself firmly established in the empire, the iron reign of tyranny commenced, in all its bitter and dreadful forms;—the Indians perished in thousands, under the scourge of their barbarous and cruel task-masters.

The remonstrances of many prelates, but particularly of the beneficent and venerable *Las Casas*, against such horrors and anti-christian principles, at length awakened the attention of the emperor Charles V. To check the disorders of the settlers, and to meliorate the condition of the natives, he instituted the famous tribunal of the Indies, and appointed officers specially for the purpose of acting as a check on the conduct of the settlers. But these protectors and judges speedily rendered nugatory all the humane institutions of the emperor. As no complaints could reach the ear of the monarch but through them, they soon guarded all the avenues to the throne; and, urged by thirst of gain, they combined with the settlers in acts of the most flagrant injustice: so that the wrongs of the Mexicans continued unabated.

Charles V., however, persevered in enacting the most salutary and humane code of laws for the welfare of the colonies. In looking over those laws, we find many of them breathing a spirit of humanity and sound policy, that would do honour to the most enlightened age. It was enacted, that *the discoverers*, *the settlers*, *and their posterity*, *and those born in the country*, *were to be preferred before all others*, *in offices of church*, *state*, *and jurisprudence*. In that plain and important regulation was comprised a fundamental principle to promote the prosperity, and secure the affections, of the colonists. A

departure from this principle ever has, and ever will be, fatal to the sovereignty of a mother country over its colonies.

It was likewise enacted, that *the aborigines were to be considered as free men, and vassals of the crown of Spain;* the colonies were declared to be *an integral part of the monarchy;* and to such an extent were the *rights* of the Americans protected, that no law promulgated in the mother country could take effect, unless sanctioned by the representative government of the colonies, which was vested in the council of the Indies.

How different a scene would have been displayed in Spanish America, from that which it now exhibits, if these wise and just principles had been faithfully observed by the successors of Charles V.! But, alas! experience has afforded melancholy proofs, that they all have been long since scattered to the winds; and, in their place has been established, a system of colonial policy, having for its aim, the perpetuity of ignorance, injustice, and despotism, over the new world: a system which has resulted in the political degradation, and even abject thraldom, of the Creoles as well as Indians. Ask the European Spaniard, why these salutary laws have never been put in execution, since the day of their enactment? and, if he is capable of an impartial answer, he will reply, that such laws would have placed a check on his pride and avarice, and would have prevented him from exercising an unnatural authority over the lives and property of millions of Americans.

The viceroys, sent out as representatives of the king, to carry into effect the "Leyes de las Indias," and to guard the interests of the Creole from being infringed upon, were the first and most distinguished violators of those very laws. The vast expanse of ocean between them and the mother country, freed them from all restraint. Surrounded by all the pomp and splendour of royalty, they thought only of exercising regal powers, and of amassing riches by every possible means; so that, on their return to Spain, they might, by the aid and powerful influence of gold, completely bar every complaint of the Americans from reaching the throne. In a little while, corruption spread through every department of government, in old Spain; so that the viceroys, captains general, intendants,

and all the dignitaries of the church, who were sent to America, and all their immediate agents, formed a strong phalanx, combined in their interests and views; and, as they were the only channel through which complaints could be transmitted from America to the Peninsula, it is obvious, that not one grievance in ten thousand, which occurred in the colonies, ever reached the council of the Indies, much less the ear of the monarch. At length, so confident did these tyrants become, in the exercise of their iniquitous system, that they treated with scorn and cruelty, every Creole who dared to resist their imperious mandates; and hence was established, a system of passive obedience and suffering, on the part of the Creole and Indian, such as was never before exhibited, and which no colonists, in any age, or in any country, had ever before endured.

The European Spaniards, having thus acquired the supreme authority, and conjoining in their hands all the civil, military, and ecclesiastical employments, committed, with impunity, enormities of the deepest die. Justice became subservient to caprice and interest; and dissensions were fomented between the European and Creole. The latter found himself cut off from every hope of redress, saw his rights, as a man, prostrated, and all the paths to social distinctions impeded by obstacles he could not overcome. Thus degraded and persecuted, hatred was engendered, and usurped, in his heart, the ties of consanguinity.

After the death of Charles V., his successors appear to have studied which of them could most outrageously trample on the laws, enacted during that monarch's reign. The Americans have not only been excluded from the privileges granted them by those laws, but even the descendants of the conquerors have been despoiled of many of their rights. Men, without education, talent, or character, have been appointed to civil, military, and ecclesiastical offices, of the greatest responsibility. And corruption, in the latter period, had reached so great a height, that almost every office in America was sold at a fixed price, or procured by some court parasite.

During the famous, or rather infamous administration of Godoy, sacrilegiously called the prince of peace, every office in America, from that of the viceroy down to that of a menial dependant of the custom house, was publicly sold; except in a few instances, in which they were bestowed on the servants of the prince, as a premium for their intrigues, or, as it was styled, as a reward for their fidelity to his royal master or royal mistress. A major domo of the royal household, has been elevated to the government of an American province, and there have been intendants, and judges of the Real Audiencia, the highest judicial tribunal in America, who were men known in Spain for their vices only, or as panders for the pleasures of the prince and the queen. Under men like these, were the lives and the properties of the Spanish Americans placed. Out of *one hundred and sixty viceroys*, who have ruled in America, four only were Creoles born, and even those four were brought up from their infancy in Spain, and were appointed to the station from accidental circumstances, or family connexions in the Peninsula.

The government of Spain, dreading the introduction of foreign literature, and the culture of those natural talents, with which the Creole is so highly gifted, placed every bar to his improvement, by impeding a system of liberal education. And they were particularly studious to preserve the Creoles from the contaminating intercourse of foreigners.

In the colleges, the Latin language, ancient philosophy, theological dogmas, mathematics, and some superficial branches of education, alone are taught, and the elements of general knowledge are withheld from the students; and the greater part of the Creoles are unacquainted with history, except, perhaps, that of Spain. Many attempts have been made to introduce public schools, in different parts of Mexico, but they have always failed, through the secret or open opposition of the Spanish government, which has not hesitated to declare, that *it was not expedient for learning to become general in America.*

The eulogies, passed on the course of education in Mexico, by M. De Humboldt, are calculated to convey, to a reader

unacquainted with the real state of that country, an impression, that an excellent system of education has been established and disseminated by the government. This is not the only instance in which that enlightened traveller and philosopher has flattered the Spanish government; but he has occasionally compensated for this incense, by developing many unpalatable truths. The most superficial observer, who has visited Mexico, must have discovered the great want of seminaries of education; for it is only in the city of Mexico, that any scholastic establishments, deserving that name, are to be found; and the abject ignorance, of the great body of society throughout the kingdom, affords a lamentable evidence of the paucity of institutions of this nature. There is not, in fact, a despotic country, in any part of the old world, which professes Christianity, where education is so limited, and where foreign literature is so little known, as in Mexico.

The commerce and agriculture of the Creoles have likewise felt the fatal and dreadful influence of Spanish despotism. The commerce of the colonies has been restricted to a few Cadiz merchants. The arts, exactions, and injustice, of those avaricious monopolists, would scarcely be believed by the civilized world. Our limits will not permit us to detail them, but we may observe, that extortion was the leading feature of that disgraceful commerce. The shipments to Mexico consisted of cargoes of the miserable manufactures of Spain, or, of the imperfect products of her agriculture, and of some foreign fabrics, so burthened with imposts, that only the most wealthy classes of society could buy them. The consumption of such cargoes was forced upon the Creoles, by every arbitrary and ingenious measure, to the exclusion of commerce through any other channel but that of old Spain; and to the neglect of those advantages, which all-bountiful nature has granted the Americans, in the fertility of their soil, and genial climate. To ensure the sale of Spanish wines and brandies, the Creoles were forbidden to manufacture either; olives were not allowed to be planted; the cultivation of the silk worm was interdicted; and, with regard to vines, even such as had been raised for the purpose of affording the Creole a grateful fruit.

became an object of jealousy to the Cadiz monopolists, and an order was actually sent out by the government of Spain, to grub up all the vines in the country.

The article of tobacco, one of the greatest essentials to the comfort of a Spanish American, was a monopoly of the crown. In Mexico, it is only permitted to be cultivated in the district of Orizaba. The planter was not allowed to seek a market for what he raised. It was forcibly taken from him, at a fixed price, by the king, who manufactured, and retailed it out, at an enormous advance, to the people. The revenue derived from this monopoly was immense; and the unfortunate planter who raised, and the people who consumed, the plant, had the mortification to see the revenue, derived from this source, divided and squandered away, amongst a host of European Spaniards, who came, almost annually, from Spain, to fill the posts in the administration of tobacco. When a vacancy occurred, by death or otherwise, vain was the application of a Creole to fill it, except in some rare instances, and, even then, appointments were the result of bribery.

Such is a brief outline of the scenes of injustice and oppression, to which the Creole of Spanish America was so long a passive victim. Manifold as were the grievances, they may be summed up by saying, that he was deprived of the enjoyment of his social, and even of his natural rights, except so far as it occasionally suited the caprice or interest of a despot, to grant them to him as an indulgence. In this state of things in America, the struggles in the Peninsula commenced.

The news of the declaration of war against France, on the 6th of June, 1808, by the Supreme Junta of Seville, in place of exciting feelings of disaffection among the Creoles, or opening to their view the career of ambition, was, by them, enthusiastically received. Ferdinand was proclaimed, with every demonstration of joy and loyalty. Congratulatory addresses, from all quarters, poured in to the viceroys. The temples of divine worship resounded with the most fervent supplications to the Deity for the release of their monarch; every house presented pictures of their favourite king; and the air was filled with shouts of "Viva Fernando 7°." Unanimous re-

solves were adopted, to repel the meditated dominion of the French, and to afford generous and abundant resources to their European brethren in arms. One universal sentiment of ardent loyalty pervaded the American colonies, and the poor Creole seems to have thrown a veil of oblivion over all his wrongs, and to have directed his whole soul, at that juncture, to the cause of Spain. Future ages will scarcely believe, that a people thus generous and loyal, were about to experience such heart-rending scenes, as have made the bloody horrors of the conquest trivial, by comparison; and, that a war of extermination was soon to be declared against them, in reward for their generosity and loyalty.

After the occurrences at Bayonne had taken place, orders from *Murat* were received in the colonies; and, at the same moment, when the Creoles were swearing allegiance to their captured monarch, the Europeans were strenuously engaged in taking the most effectual measures to bring the Americans over to *French allegiance;* and some of the viceroys openly made advances to the people, in the name of the emperor Napoleon. Emissaries from king Joseph spread themselves over the continent, to pave the way for the adoption of the French government. They brought orders from *Ferdinand*, and *the council of the Indies*, to *transfer to France the allegiance of America.* The Europeans received the French emissaries with open arms, while the Creoles publicly burnt their proclamations; and, with cries of "Viva Fernando 7°," expelled these political intruders from their soil. These are facts of public notoriety; they stand recorded, and cannot be questioned.

Thus were the Americans the defenders of their king; while the conduct of the Europeans and their chiefs was stained with treachery of the darkest hues.

During the period that the French gained ground in the Peninsula, and Spain was torn by contending factions, the defection of the European Spaniards became so glaring, that in the short space of six months, a simultaneous rising of the colonists was caused. Without concert, from the same motives, and with the same views, the Creoles endeavoured, and, in

some instances, succeeded, in deposing their perjured chiefs; declaring, at the same time, their determination to hold their country for their legitimate monarch.

This course of conduct was no sooner made known in Spain, than, in place of being viewed as an evidence of loyalty, or as a great political event, growing out of imperious circumstances, it was considered, by the Cadiz regency, as an outrageous rebellion, and war was declared against Caraccas, in the month of August, 1810. But we must confine ourselves more particularly to Mexico.

Don José Iturrigaray, viceroy at that period, on receiving intelligence of the critical situation in which Ferdinand was involved, and looking with a cautious eye on the strange orders of Ferdinand, those of the council of the Indies, and of Murat, and aware likewise of the local dangers which threatened the kingdom, from the known hatred existing between the Creoles and Europeans, proposed calling a junta, to be formed by a representation from each province, in order to adopt a provisional government, in which the people would have confidence. This purity of Iturrigaray's intentions was known then, and is still acknowledged by every enlightened Creole in the country. His sole object was to save the kingdom from the horrors of anarchy, and from French intrigue. In the adoption of these measures, the viceroy was cordially supported by the cabildo, who, by an energetic memorial, pointed out that those measures would alone inspire confidence. The memorial proposed, that the viceroy should remain as the representative of the king; that the usual authorities should retain the same power as before; but that a governing junta should be established, composed of the royal audiencia, the archbishop, the municipality, and deputies from the several ecclesiastical and secular bodies, the nobility, principal citizens, and military.

In the formation of such a junta, it was obvious that Creoles would be blended with Europeans. But the latter, dreading the ascendency which the Creoles might gain from a popular government, opposed this loyal and rational overture, and secretly determined on boldly removing the viceroy. This

resolution they promptly carried into effect; and, privately arming themselves, they arrested the unsuspecting viceroy and his family, on the night of the 15th of September, 1808, and sent them prisoners to the Peninsula.

This act excited universal indignation among all classes of Americans, by whom the viceroy was held in the highest estimation. His administration had been characterized by a course very different from that of any of his predecessors. He was not only benign and just in his decisions, but indefatigable in the measures he adopted for the internal improvement of the kingdom. It was, indeed, his popularity among the Americans, that excited the jealousy of the old Spaniards.

These circumstances, conjoined with the subsequent massacre of several distinguished Americans, and the arrest and banishment of others, who had espoused the viceroy's plans, highly incensed the Mexicans. In this state of fermentation, arrived Iturrigaray's successor, Vanegas, bringing with him from Spain, rewards, distinctions, and offices, for those Europeans who had been conspicuous instruments in deposing the late viceroy.

The conduct of Vanegas, during his career in the Peninsula, had not been calculated to inspire confidence among the people over whom he was sent to preside. He had delivered up one or two armies, and had otherwise acted in a manner to make him a very obnoxious character in the eyes of the Americans.

These events, combined with the recollection of their former grievances, operated powerfully on the minds of the Mexicans; and, at length, the rancour, which had been so long smothered in their breasts, burst forth: for, being no longer able to bear with such flagrant injustice, finding that every day added a new weight to their oppressions, and seeing no hopes of redress but through their own exertions, they entered into a plan to hurl their tyrants from their seats of power.

In this conspiracy were engaged many of the most distinguished men in the kingdom, principally ecclesiastics and lawyers. It was conducted with the greatest secrecy, and extended to almost every city in the kingdom. A simulta-

neous insurrection was intended in the provinces; and the plot had nearly reached maturity, when it was checked by one of those accidents which frequently prevent the realization of great projects; else, it is highly probable that Vanegas would have been the last viceroy on the Mexican throne.

One of the conspirators, in a death-bed confession, revealed not only the plot, but the names of many of his principal accomplices. Vanegas was alarmed at the magnitude of the plan, but was in hopes, that by seizing the principals he would be able to check it; and he took the most prompt and active measures to arrest those who were denounced. In the province of Guanaxuato, the head of the conspiracy was Dr. Hidalgo, the rector of Dolores, in which town, and the adjacent one of San Miguel el Grande, many of the conspirators resided.

Vanegas despatched orders for the arrest of Hidalgo and his party; but, as some of their colleagues were persons enjoying the confidence of the viceroy, and knew the measures he was adopting, they immediately despatched private couriers to apprize the rector of what was in agitation. The intelligence was received by captain Don Ignacio Allende, who commanded a small body of king's troops in San Miguel. He flew to Hidalgo, at Dolores, with the information. They at once agreed that flight was of no avail. They knew that, if taken, death was inevitable; and they therefore resolved on making a desperate effort to save themselves and their party. Allende having brought over his men, and the proscribed party being in readiness, the tocsin of revolt was sounded, on the night of the 10th of September, 1810; and thus commenced the civil wars of Mexico, which we now attempt to comprise in the following sketch.

The *pueblo* of Dolores consisted principally of Indians, who adored their pastor Hidalgo, and who immediately joined him. He proceeded to San Miguel, where his numbers were considerably augmented. From thence he marched to the city of Zelaya, where he was joined by immense throngs of Indians, armed with clubs, slings, and missile weapons.

As matters had so far progressed well, it was next proposed to nominate a commander. Allende, as being the only military man, was named; but, as Hidalgo's popularity was considered of infinitely more importance to the cause, in its critical situation, than mere military acquirements, he was chosen commander-in-chief, with the rank of captain general.

Hidalgo was a man of irreproachable character, and beloved, not only within the range of his rectory, but in the adjoining provinces. He was regarded as a man of penetration, and considered well informed; that is, he had acquired such knowledge as a well educated Creole usually possesses. His reading had been confined to such works as the jealousy of the old Spaniards, and the scrutiny of the Inquisition, permitted to be circulated: of course, it is not presumable, that from such sources he could have derived much knowledge of the world. He was frank and generous, and knew very little of cunning, intrigue, and baseness, the characteristics of his opponents.

Hidalgo considered, that, as the names and plans of the conspirators had been revealed, and their projects thus nipped in the bud, it was necessary to make desperate exertions, and resort to every possible means of exciting the courage and passions of the Indians.* With this view, he unfortunately

* It must not be inferred, from the use of this word *Indian*, that the people to whom it is applied resemble the savages of North America. They are, it is true, descendants of the aborigines; but, with few exceptions, they are a civilized people. They are tractable, and accustomed to the labours of civilized life. In many points they preserve the customs of their ancestors, and particularly cherish their native language; for although, in general, they understand and speak Spanish correctly, yet, in their intercourse with each other, they use their native language. Notwithstanding they all profess Christianity, yet the Spanish priests frequently discover them sacrificing, in private, according to their ancient system of idolatry. The Mexican Indian, although mild, and obedient to his task-master, yet bears in remembrance the outrages the Spaniards inflicted upon his forefathers, and secretly sighs for the day of revenge. All that the Spanish government and Spanish writers have said about their loyalty and fidelity, is mere fiction. During the present revolution, they have invariably manifested their ill will towards the Spaniards; and even in the towns and villages, where there were no royal

and precipitately authorized the cry of "Destruction to the Gachupins."* Hidalgo does not appear, by any act of his life previous to the revolution, to have been a sanguinary man; and, therefore, his sanction of the cry of "Destruction to the Gachupins and their race," ought to be attributed to the reason before mentioned, and not to a deliberate intention of indiscriminately sacrificing them. But, while this apology is offered, his error is deeply to be deplored; not merely on the grounds of humanity, but because *it is to this impolitic act that the failure of the revolutionists may in a great measure be ascribed.*

If Hidalgo had reflected that the great body of conspirators were Creoles, distinguished by their wealth and high standing in the community, and consequently would take alarm at a commotion that menaced their lives and property, he would have pursued a very different course, and would have had almost every Creole in the country in his favour: but, rendered desperate, as before observed, by considering his colleagues destroyed, and their plans discovered, he made use of the Indians as a dernier resource, and, by exciting them to the destruction of all the Gachupins, committed a dreadful and irremediable error.

troops actually quartered, a Creole insurgent, in flying from his enemies, has always found an inviolable asylum among the Indians: whereas, if a royalist took refuge in an Indian village, within the jurisdiction of the insurgents, he never escaped. The descendants from the Indian caciques have a high degree of family pride, and consider a connexion with a European Spaniard as a pollution of blood.

* This term *Gachupin* has been variously interpreted; but it is universally used by the Creoles and Indians as a word of contempt. The Spaniards say it means "a man with two heads," thereby conveying an idea of superior understanding; and that it took its origin from the invasion of Cortez, upon one of his cavalry being killed. The Indians, who till then had never seen a horse, supposed the animal and its rider to be a single animal. When they beheld the horse and rider fall, they ran up and examined the phenomenon, and finding the man distinct from the horse, they expressed their surprise by exclaiming, "Gatzopin." The Indians, however, flatly deny the Spanish story, and say the word means "thief." But be that as it may, it is most certain that the word is now used as a mark of scorn and opprobrium.

The first steps of the Indians were marked by horrid excesses. Through every place they passed, the European Spaniards that fell into their hands, and many Creoles, were slaughtered. A large portion of the Creole population, who were as desirous as Hidalgo and his party for the emancipation of their country, now began to tremble for their personal safety, and sought protection from their ancient oppressors. Nevertheless, the forces of Hidalgo continued rapidly to swell; and, during his stay at Zelaȳa, the Indians from every quarter flocked to his standard. Numbers of Creole priests, and some royalist soldiers, also joined him. When he left Zelaȳa, his army consisted of nearly twenty thousand men; but was a heterogeneous mass, without fire-arms or order. With this force, he marched upon Guanaxuato, the capital of the intendancy of that name, and a city next in point of wealth to the metropolis of New Spain; the richest gold and silver mines in all Spanish America being in the vicinage of Guanaxuato.

On the approach of the patriotic army, the intendant of the province, with all the Spaniards, some Creoles, and the few troops which were in the city, shut themselves up in the castle, and determined on an obstinate defence. Hidalgo summoned them to surrender, and offered them humane terms, which were rashly refused.

The place was attacked, and carried. The unfortunate Spaniards, and all who adhered to them, were sacrificed by the infuriated Indians. In vain Hidalgo interposed, to prevent the slaughter: he now saw, when too late, that revenge was the predominant feeling among his Indians, and that nothing would satisfy them but the extermination of the Gachupins. The treasures, which fell into the hands of the conquerors, would appear incredible to the reader, if he did not consider, that we have reference to a city surrounded by the richest mines in the known world. The sacking of the city continued for three days; and the plunderers were loaded with doubloons, dollars, and ingots of gold and silver. The precious metals were found in some private houses, as well as in

the public buildings, piled in vast heaps. The Indians were occupied several days in carrying off these treasures; and it was supposed that every man took away at least five hundred dollars, but the greater proportion, several thousands. The Indians, afterwards, offered their doubloons for sale at four reals each, conceiving that they were only gilt medals.*

Hidalgo had now such an overflowing treasury, that he paid his soldiers a dollar a day each; and as to his officers, he allowed them to help themselves to whatever amount they liked.

From the preceding relation it may be inferred, that Hidalgo was highly culpable, in permitting the perpetration of those deeds of rapine and murder. We have before stated, that his private character was unblemished; but, in the novel situation in which he found himself placed, it was not extraordinary that he should permit the Indians to enjoy the first fruits of their exertions. He considered it politic to let them have palpable proofs that they would profit by the revolution; and, with regard to the slaughter of the Spaniards, it was impossible for him to prevent it. Still it is a fact, that there are now a great number of European Spaniards and Creoles living in Mexico, who were protected and saved from death by the humanity of Hidalgo; and, in many instances, most ungratefully did they requite his clemency. They proved themselves, subsequently, the most cruel and implacable enemies of the patriots, and particularly of the insurgent Indians, that fell into their hands. These were massacred, in the most wanton manner, by the very prisoners whose lives Hidalgo had formerly saved.

After the capture of Guanaxuato, Hidalgo found his forces augmenting so fast, that he determined to advance on the city of Mexico. He proceeded by the route of Valladolid, gather-

* The people, of all classes, wear medals suspended from the neck, bearing the impression of some favourite saint, but generally of the Virgin of Guadaloupe: some of them are of silver, others merely gilt; and as, in shape and appearance, the latter resemble a doubloon, the poor Indians did not know the difference. Nothing can more strongly elucidate the wretched ignorance and poverty of the great mass of Indians, than this anecdote. A real, Mexican currency, is the eighth of a dollar.

ing an hourly accession of Indians, and some few royalist deserters.

The revolt had by this time spread with electric rapidity, over a great part of the kingdom. Even in the city of Mexico, Puebla de los Angeles, and in other places, the Spanish authorities were trembling for their safety. It was a critical moment for the Spaniards; their government was upon the very point of being overthrown, and their persons sacrificed. The forces of the government were entirely Creole, and if any conspicuous officer, at that time, either in the cities of Mexico or Puebla, had declared in favour of Hidalgo, the revolution would have succeeded.

The Creoles beheld with alarm, their fate depending on an ignorant and infuriated body of Indians, and were compelled to rally round the existing authorities, as the only means of personal safety. Very different would have been their feelings and conduct, if the revolution had broken out as it was *originally planned, amongst the wealthy and leading Creoles of the principal cities:* but, as the plot had been prematurely frustrated, and the rebellion had commenced with the Indians, from whom all classes of whites had as much to fear as the Spaniards, and, as the career of Hidalgo and his party was marked by horrid excesses, it became the policy, indeed, the imperious interest, of the Creoles, to adhere to the viceroy. Still, however, there were daily desertions from the royalists, and the forces of Hidalgo were assuming a formidable aspect. He had already marched eighty leagues, without opposition, and was approaching the gates of the city, with at least one hundred and ten thousand men. It is true, that amongst this vast multitude, there were not more than *a thousand muskets*, but they were animated with a lofty spirit, and were full of ardour. Had they been well directed, or been subject to any species of order, they might, even with clubs and slings, have committed great havoc among their opponents.

The viceroy Vanegas prepared to resist the storm with great firmness, and had previously taken prompt and strong measures to throw Hidalgo and his party into confusion. He issued proclamations, breathing death and extermination

against the rebels. He decreed, that whoever should be taken with arms in their hands, should be shot, whether they were of the clergy or not, or in whatever numbers; and he allowed only fifteen minutes for each criminal to prepare for eternity. At the same time, he offered his majesty's pardon to all who should return to their allegiance. The church likewise hurled its thunders with an unsparing hand. The archbishop of Mexico, in the fulness of his holy zeal, declared all the insurgents to be *heretics*. He excommunicated them in a body, with all the ceremony and rigour of papal anathemas; and painted, in vivid colours, the enormity of their crime, in having taken up arms against a monarch, on whose head the sacred unction had been poured. He ordered all the Spanish clergy, and their faithful Creoles, to represent from the pulpit, and to circulate reports, that the great object of the revolutionists was to subvert and destroy the holy Catholic religion; and he directed the subaltern clergy to sow discord and uneasiness among families, by means of the confessional chair. In short, no exertions were spared by the archbishop to alarm the credulous, and to agitate the minds of the Mexican people, and there is no doubt, that his fulminations had a powerful tendency to paralyze the operations of the revolutionists.

On the approach of Hidalgo to the city of Mexico, the viceroy displayed great activity and presence of mind. He barricaded the streets, and adopted every manner of defence of which the city was susceptible; all the arms that could be procured were distributed among the citizens of the capital, and he pointed out to them the dreadful consequences that would ensue, in case they permitted Hidalgo and his party to enter into the city.

A detachment of troops was despatched from the city, under the command of Truxillo, to check the advance of Hidalgo. He took post in a narrow defile of the mountains, at a place called Las Cruces, about eight leagues from the capital, where he awaited the insurgents. An action took place; but the overwhelming force of Hidalgo compelled him to abandon his position, and retreat upon the city, where he arrived, with the loss of his artillery, and a number of his troops. This dis-

aster spread a gloom over the royalists, but the viceroy persevered in placing the city in a state of defence, and endeavoured, by his presence, to animate the people.

In the account that Truxillo gave of the affair at Las Cruces, a stranger would suppose that he had defended the defile with the obstinacy of a Leonidas; but it appears there was a part of the Spartan hero's conduct, which Truxillo and some other Spanish officers did not think expedient to imitate. He boasts, in his despatch, that such were his loyal feelings and indignation, that he had *fired upon the bearers of a flag of truce, which Hidalgo had sent to him.*

After the action of Las Cruces, Hidalgo advanced to the Hacienda of *Quaximalpa*, only five leagues distant from the city of Mexico. Hidalgo and his army were now in full view of the capital of that kingdom, the overthrow of whose government they had resolved to effect. A bold and enterprising man would have decided the fate of the empire in less than twenty-four hours. He would have calculated, that, although his forces were undisciplined, yet they were brave and enthusiastic, and such was their great numerical superiority over the enemy, that a comparatively trifling sacrifice of lives would have ensured success to the attempt.

Unfortunately, Hidalgo possessed none of the requisites, in his character, essential for that critical moment. He paused, at the instant that activity and energy should have marked all his actions, and, instead of advancing directly to the assault, he sent a summons to the viceroy to surrender the city. To this demand no answer was returned, and Vanegas contrived, by emissaries, to impress Hidalgo with the opinion that the preparations for defence had rendered the city almost impregnable, to a disordered multitude, without fire-arms. Hidalgo ought, however, to have considered, that the city contained about thirty thousand people of the same description with his army, upon whose disaffection to the royalists he could have relied, and that the whole armed force did not exceed ten thousand men, a body by no means sufficient to guard the extensive lines of that vast city. Had he attacked it at different points, with divisions of twenty or thirty thousand men, there

would have been, at least, a chance of his succeeding; while the loss of the opportunity he then had of striking a decisive blow, would encourage the enemy, and enable them to strengthen their defence, and even to act on the offensive. None of these reflections appear to have occurred to Hidalgo. On the contrary, he was struck with a panic, and, resolving to abandon the project of attacking the city, he commenced a retreat, after remaining two or three days in sight of Mexico.

The viceroy had early despatched Don *Felix Maria Calleja* to concentrate the royal forces, who was actually on his march to the relief of the city, with a well appointed Creole army of ten thousand men, and a train of artillery, at the very time when Hidalgo retreated from before Mexico. Vanegas, eased of his apprehensions for the capital, ordered Calleja to attack Hidalgo.

The two armies met at Aculco, where an obstinate and bloody battle was fought. The Indians evinced a degree of valour entirely unexpected on the part of the royalists. They rushed with their clubs on the bayonets of the columns of the enemy, and fell in heaps. They were so totally ignorant of the effects of artillery, that in the height of their enthusiasm, they fearlessly ran up to the cannon, and with their *Sombreros de petate* (flag hats) endeavoured to stop up the muzzles of the guns. A scene ensued that baffles description. Without order, and under no command, each one acted for himself, and confusion was spread in every direction through the army of Hidalgo. At length, the discipline of the royal troops prevailed; who, taking advantage of the disorder of the Indians, put them to the rout, and commenced a slaughter, which ceased only when the Spaniards had become exhausted with the work of death. Calleja, in his despatches, exults that the insurgents lost ten thousand men, of whom five thousand were deliberately put to the sword.

After this disastrous battle, Hidalgo retreated on Guanaxuato; from whence he fell back upon *Guadalaxara*, leaving the rear guard under Allende in the former place.

Calleja, flushed with the victory he had recently gained, resolved to follow it up, and accordingly advanced on Guan-

axuato. Allende gave him battle at the Hacienda of *Marfil*, about a league from the city. The patriots, in this action, were not in a situation to cope with Calleja, but they defended themselves with great obstinacy. They were defeated, and Allende, with the remains of his troops, retreated on Hidalgo.

Calleja now entered the city of Guanaxuato as a conqueror, and there exhibited his vindictive and cruel disposition without restraint. Rendered furious by the timely retreat of Hidalgo, and at the conduct which the inhabitants of that city had displayed in favour of the rebellion, he determined to make an example so dreadful, as should strike terror into the revolted provinces.

The sacrifice of the prisoners taken at the battle of Marfil was not sufficient to satiate his vindictive spirit. He glutted his vengeance on the defenceless populace of Guanaxuato. Men, women, and children, were driven, by his orders, into the great square; and several thousand (it is said fourteen) of these wretches, were butchered in the most barbarous manner. Their throats were cut. The principal fountain of the city was literally overflowing with blood, and, far from concealing these savage acts, Calleja, in his despatches, exults in the honour of communicating to the viceroy the intelligence, that he had purged the city of its rebellious population. The only apology offered for the mode of sacrifice was, that it would have wasted too much powder and ball to have shot them, and that, therefore, on a principle of economy, their throats were cut.

The tragic scenes of Guanaxuato were the commencement of a system of cruelty, which Calleja and his contemporaries exercised in almost every city, town, and village, through which they marched. His name, united with that of *Cruz*, *Concha*, *Yturvidi*, *Castañon*, *Negrette*, and *Liñan*, will be transmitted to future ages with the bitter execrations of the Mexicans.

This monster soon received proofs from the Cadiz regency, of their high satisfaction with his conduct. They appointed him to succeed Vanegas in the viceregal power.

No sooner was he seated in the supreme chair of state, than terror spread throughout the empire. Murder, fire, and devastation, were dealt out with a merciless hand, and neither age, sex, nor condition, could repress the rage of this barbarian. These his qualifications appeared to have met with warm admirers in Old Spain, where he was elevated to high honours. He was created *count* of *Calderon;* and subsequently appointed to the command of the expedition formed at Cadiz, for the subjugation of South America. Fortunately, that expedition has failed, and happy is it for the Americans that Calleja did not again pollute the soil of their country; for had he landed on it, his hands would again have been dyed in blood, and his ears again delighted with deep-breathed maledictions. But to resume the history.

Hidalgo's army, although it had sustained a loss of at least thirty thousand men, in killed, prisoners, and deserters, was still about eighty thousand strong; and as some pains had been taken to reduce them to order, they were much better calculated to make a resistance than before.

The heavy guns from the works at San Blas had been conveyed to Guadalaxara, and lines were thrown up, which at least bore the aspect of fortifications. Hidalgo felt more confident, and looked forward to his being able to make a firm stand at Guadalaxara. He endeavoured to excite the spirits of his army by energetic and judicious harangues, and earnestly solicited the Indians not to commit the same errors that had occurred in the previous combats. Thus prepared, he awaited the approach of Calleja, who soon made his appearance before the city. The battle was fought at the pass of the *bridge of Calderon.* In the early part of the action, the patriots swept all before them; they rushed in among, and broke the royal columns. But confusion arising among the Indians, a desperate charge was made upon them, by a regiment which Calleja had kept in reserve. A general rout ensued. The Indians, flying in all directions, were pursued, and massacred by thousands.

The most appalling scenes of cruelty were renewed, the details of which are forborne, lest the heart of the reader

should sicken at the picture of sanguinary horror. Suffice it to say, that every prisoner, who fell into the hands of the relentless Calleja, was murdered; and a tragedy similar to that which was performed at Guanaxuato, was acted at Guadalaxara, towards all persons on whom lighted the least suspicion of having supported the cause of Hidalgo.

The Spaniards, animated by these successes, issued orders to exterminate the inhabitants of every town and village that manifested symptoms of adherence to the rebels, and, from the pulpit, new fulminations flowed against all who opposed the royal authority. The most ridiculous stories were circulated among the credulous and superstitious natives. Tracts were published by the clergy, stating that the recent victories had been obtained by the special intervention of the Deity, who had, during the late actions, exhibited in the clouds *crosses and palms*, in token of His protection to the royal cause. These tales were not without effect, particularly over those who had already become disheartened by discomfiture.

Hidalgo, with some of his chief officers, escaped, and took the road for the internal provinces.* It is said that he meant to attempt by that route to gain the United States. He reached a place called *Acatila de Bajan*, near the Saltillo; where, himself and his officers were treacherously delivered up by an officer named Bustamante, on the 25th of March. In this man, Hidalgo had placed the greatest confidence, and he had

* The internal provinces form three divisions. 1st. Those of the viceroyalty.—The province of San Luis Potosi; colony of New Santander; and New Kingdom of Leon. 2d. Eastern internal provinces.—Cohahuila and Texas. 3d. Western.—Durango, Sonora, New Mexico, and the Californias.

The eastern and western provinces are each commanded by a commandant general.

The commandant general of the eastern provinces, commands, in a military point of view, those of New Santander, New Kingdom of Leon, Cohahuila, and Texas; but the finances of the two last only, pass through his hands. Those of the other two, and of San Luis, are remitted direct to the Treasury of Mexico, by the intendant of the intendancy of San Luis Potosi. The head quarters of the eastern commandant general are at Monterey.

The commandant general of the western provinces commands, in every respect, Durango, Sonora, New Mexico, and the Calefornias; his head quarters are at Chihuahua.

previously been attached to his party. Hidalgo was taken to Chihuahua, in the intendancy of Durango, and there shot, on the 27th of July, 1811.

It appears, by the accounts published in the Gazette of Mexico, that, a few hours before his death, he made a solemn recantation of his errors; and there is a long address, said to be written by him, in which he unfolds to his countrymen the enormity of their crime, in taking up arms against their legitimate sovereign, and entreats them to return to their duty, &c. The friends of Hidalgo say, that all this is a royal forgery, and that he died supplicating Heaven to favour the struggles of his country for independence. But be this as it may, it is well known now, that such arts, on the part of the royalists, have been frequently employed, since the death of Hidalgo; for, scarcely a single patriot chief of note has been executed, whose penitence, and formal abjuration of the cause he had espoused, has not been published in the Mexican Gazette.

Allende, who was taken with Hidalgo, suffered death on the 20th of June, 1811: all the other officers were likewise executed, about the same time.

CHAPTER II.

State of the Revolution, after the Death of Hidalgo—General Don José Maria Morelos—Capture of Oaxaca and Acapulco—Formation of a Congress and Constitution—Manifesto of the Junta of Zultepec—Defeat at Valladolid—General Matamoros taken prisoner and shot—Capture of Morelos, at Tepecuacuilco—His Death—Arrival of the Congress at Tchuacan—General Observations.

THE flame of civil war had, by this time, spread itself over a great part of the kingdom; and, notwithstanding the disasters of Hidalgo, the exterminating decrees of the viceroy, and the anathemas of the church, the cause of liberty was rapidly gaining proselytes.

Many of the officers, who had escaped from the fatal action of the bridge of Calderon, retired to the different provinces, where they raised considerable bodies of Creoles and Indians, and soon astonished the royalists by their valorous exploits. With slings and clubs, they gained many important victories, and thus were enabled to procure fire-arms.

The Cadiz regency, at the end of November, 1811, despatched a body of European troops to Mexico. These, however, were soon destroyed, by the partisan warfare carried on by the Mexicans.

The patriots gained battle after battle, but a total want of concerted plans, and a deficiency of arms and munitions of war, rendered their successes of mere temporary consequence, and only gave them an influence over the country within their immediate range. This influence, however, was daily enlarging, and at length the great provinces of *Guanaxuato*, *Valladolid*, *New Galicia*, *Zacatecas*, and parts of the provinces of *La Puebla*, *Vera Cruz*, *Mexico*, and *San Luis Potosi*, were so far under the controul of the patriots, that the royalists were penned up in their few fortified cities, and could not

move beyond their walls, but with large armies, and trains of artillery. The royalists, notwithstanding, possessed many very important and decided advantages over the patriots. They acted in unison. The European Spaniards, and their Creole adherents, were under the direction of a government firmly established for centuries, which now bent all its energies in the same direction; they had men among them of military instruction, were in possession of nearly every musket, and cannon, and all the munitions of war in the kingdom; their finances were conducted by system; their governors were adepts in the intrigues of the old world; and, lastly, they kept open, and maintained an external communication, by which they were abundantly supplied with men, arms, munitions of war, clothing, and every requisite, from abroad.

The patriots, on the other hand, were disunited, and spread over a vast space of territory. Without any form of government, that deserved the name, there was no source from whence regular orders could emanate, and, each provincial chief, or commandant, acted as his judgment or interest counselled. They were miserably ignorant of the military art, and, as before stated, deficient in arms, and munitions of war. Their finances were under no regulation. However great the wealth that fell into their hands, it was soon squandered, without being employed in a manner beneficial to the nation. They were, besides, totally cut off from all foreign intercourse. Many of their leaders were unlettered men, and although brave and frank, yet were perpetually liable to be deceived by the finesse and duplicity of their opponents.

With all these great disadvantages on the side of the patriots, it cannot be so surprising that they did not succeed, as it is a matter of astonishment, that they should have progressed so far as they actually had done, at the time, when the distinguished patriot, *Don José Maria Morelos*, became the supreme military chief of the republic. This man was a priest, of excellent private character, and much better informed than Hidalgo, but was entirely unacquainted with military science. He began his career, by forming a body of men, in the western part of the province of Valladolid in the Tierra

Caliante, along the coast of the Pacific ocean. His standard was joined by many distinguished Creoles, and by numbers of deserters from the European troops. He had some tolerable officers, and he at length succeeded by great perseverance and activity, in equipping, and partially arming a body of seven thousand men. They were well clothed, and good discipline was established among them. They were enthusiastically attached to their commander, and sincerely devoted to the freedom of their country. So that Morelos had the satisfaction to see all his orders obeyed with alacrity and cheerfulness. With this force of seven thousand men, Morelos not only paralyzed the movements of the Spaniards, but alarmed them infinitely more than Hidalgo had done, with his heterogeneous mass of one hundred and ten thousand.

Morelos sent a division of his army into the rich province of *Oaxaca*, whose capital soon fell into his hands, together with immense wealth. The population of Oaxaca received him with open arms, and thousands joined his army. Having accomplished his views on Oaxaca, he invested the strong city and castle of *Acapulco*, which he reduced, after a siege of *fifteen months*. Such was the cramped and distracted situation of the royalists, at that time, that they could not command a force sufficient to attempt the relieving of Acapulco; and, indeed, several Spanish officers have expressed their opinions to the writer, that the most critical epoch of the revolution, was just after Morelos had captured Acapulco. At that period, several other chiefs were operating in various parts of of the kingdom, and distracting the movements of the royalists in every direction. Don Guadalupe Victoria had secured the strong holds in the province of Vera Cruz. Don Manuel Teran had a respectable force in the province of Puebla. Ossourno, with another division, was spreading terror and and confusion in the province of Mexico; while Dr. Coss, a priest, the Rayons, Bustamente, Liceaga, and other brave officers, occupied a great part of the provinces of Guanaxuato, Valladolid, Zacatecas, and New Galicia, with considerable divisions.

If Morelos had concentrated his forces in the province of Oaxaca, and fortified the important passes in the mountains of the Misteca, which constitute the only keys to its entrance; if he had directed his attention to preserve the strong city of Acapulco, and opened the ports of Oaxaca, on the Pacific ocean, to foreign commerce; and, if he had sent a division of his army, through the province of Oaxaca, to the eastward of Vera Cruz, and had taken possession of all the country at the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico, particularly of the *fine port of Guasacualco*, and opened a trade with the United States, and the British Colonies, so as to have procured from abroad, arms, munitions of war, and clothing for his troops; then indeed would the Mexican revolution have assumed another aspect, and, in all human probability, would have speedily triumphed. The forces of Morelos, at that time, were amply sufficient to have executed those objects; and the funds he had at his disposal, after the capture of Oaxaca, would have enabled him to pay for all that was required from abroad, for the use of his army.

Upwards of one thousand seroons of cochineal, and two millions of dollars in specie, were at the disposal of the republic, after the capture of Oaxaca; but these immense resources were soon annihilated in scenes of dissipation, or by the bad management of those, to whom were entrusted the national treasury.

The royalists may now very justly say, they were saved by the ignorance of Morelos, or his inattention to all those essential matters; in fact, he had become too sanguine of success, and conceived he would soon be able to march to the city of Mexico; presuming, that when he had reduced the capital, then the city of Vera Cruz, and all the other seaports, would fall, as a matter of course.

Morelos, in the midst of his military successes, appeared more anxious for the welfare of his country, than to display the character of a military chieftain. He was the first to propose and promote the formation of a civil government, and thereby gave an unequivocal proof of his patriotism. He frequently acknowledged, to his intimate friends, that he wished

to divide a responsibility, which he felt himself unequal to sustain. With these views, he convened a congress. It was composed of forty members, from the different provinces. *Don José Maria Liceaga* was elected president. A constitution was framed, at Apatzinjan in the province of Valladolid, accepted, and sworn to, throughout all the provinces which had taken up arms in favour of the republic. Whatever may be the defects of that constitution, it certainly displays more wisdom, than could have been expected from men, brought up as the framers of it had been, and situated as they then were.

The first important act, of this legislative body, was to present to their European brethren, a manifesto, stating the causes which had compelled them to take up arms. They reiterated their desire for peace, upon the basis of representation and justice, and on those terms, they offered to lay down their arms. This manifesto was energetic and just, but breathed, throughout, a spirit of conciliation; it reiterated the same sentiments that had been presented to the viceroy in 1812, by the patriotic junta of Zultepec, which in substance was as follows.

Conditions, on which the patriots were ready to sign an armistice, for the suspension of hostilities, and to enter into a treaty with the royalists.—

"*First.* The sovereignty resides in the mass of the nation. *Second.* Spain and America are integral parts of the same monarchy, subject to the same king, but respectively equal, and without any dependence and subordination, one to the other. *Third.* America, in her state of fidelity, has more right to convoke the Cortes, and call together representatives of the few patriots of Spain, already infected with disloyalty, than Spain has to call over deputies from America, by means of whom, we can never be worthily represented. *Fourth.* During the absence of the king, the inhabitants of the Peninsula have no right to appropriate to themselves the sovereign power, and represent it in these dominions. *Fifth.* All the authorities, emanating from this origin, are null. *Sixth.* For the American nation to conspire against them, by refusing to sub-

mit to an arbitrary power, is no more than using its own rights. *Seventh.* This, far from being a crime of high treason, is a service worthy of the king's gratitude, and a proof of patriotism, which his majesty would approve, if he were on the spot. *Eighth.* After what has occurred in the Peninsula, as well as in this country, since the overthrow of the throne, the American nation has a right to require a guarantee for its security, and this can be no other, than putting into execution the right which it has, of keeping these dominions for their legitimate sovereign, by itself, and without the intervention of any European people."

From these incontrovertible principles, the following just pretensions are deduced.

"*First.* That the Europeans resign the command of the armed force, into the hands of a national congress, independent of Spain, representing Ferdinand VII., and capable of securing his rights in these dominions. *Second.* That the Europeans remain in the class of citizens, being under the protection of the laws, without being injured in their persons, families, or property. *Third.* That the Europeans, at present in office, remain, with the honours, distinctions, and privileges thereof, and part of their revenue, without exercising them. *Fourth.* That as soon as this state of independency is declared, all antecedent injuries and occurrences be buried in oblivion; the most effectual measures, for this purpose, are to be adopted, and all the inhabitants of this land, as well Creoles as Europeans, shall indiscriminately constitute a nation of American citizens, vassals of Ferdinand VII., and bent only on promoting the public felicity. *Fifth.* That, in such a case, America would be able to contribute in favour of the few Spaniards engaged in sustaining the war of Spain, with those sums the national congress may assign, in testimony of our fraternity with the Peninsula, and to prove that both aspire to the same end. *Sixth.* That the Europeans, who may be desirous of quitting the kingdom, be granted passports for whatever place they may wish; but, in that case, officers shall not be allowed the portion of their pay, that might have been granted them."

Conditions on which the patriots proposed to prosecute the war.

"*First.* A war, between brethren and fellow-citizens, ought not to be more cruel than between foreign nations. *Second.* The two contending parties acknowledge Ferdinand VII.: of this, the Americans have given evident proofs, by swearing allegiance to him, and proclaiming him in every part; by carrying his portrait as their emblem; invoking his august name in their acts and proceedings, and stamping it on their coins and money. On him, the enthusiasm of all rests, and on these grounds, the insurrectional party has always acted. *Third.* The rights of nations and of war, inviolable even amongst the most infidel and savage people, ought to be much more so amongst us, who profess the same creed, and who are subject to the same sovereign and laws. *Fourth.* It is opposed to Christian morality, to act from hatred, rancour, or personal revenge. *Fifth.* Since the sword is to decide the dispute, and not the arms of reason and prudence, by means of agreements and adjustments, founded on the basis of natural equity; the contest ought to be continued in such a manner, as to be least shocking to humanity; already too much afflicted not to merit our most tender compassion."

Hence are naturally deduced, the following just pretensions.

"*First.* That prisoners be not treated as criminals, guilty of high treason. *Second.* That no one be sentenced to death, or execution, for this cause, but that all be kept as hostages, for the purpose of exchange; that they be not molested with irons and imprisonment; and, as this is a measure of precaution, let them be put loose in places where they cannot injure the views of the party by whom they may be detained. *Third.* That each one be treated according to his class and condition. *Fourth.* That, as the rights of war do not permit the effusion of blood, but in the act of combat, when this is over, let no one be killed; nor let those be fired upon who fly, or throw down their arms; but let them be made prisoners by the victor. *Fifth.* That as it is contrary to the same rights, as well as to those of nature, to enter, with fire and sword, into the defence-

less towns, or to assign, by tenths and fifths, persons to be shot, by which the innocent are confounded with the guilty; let no one be allowed, under the most severe penalties, to commit such enormities as those, which so greatly dishonour a Christian and civilized people. *Sixth.* That the inhabitants of the defenceless towns, through which the contending parties indiscriminately may pass, be not injured. *Seventh.* That as by this time, every person is undeceived with regard to the true motives of this war, and it being unwarrantable to connect this contest with the cause of religion, as was attempted at the beginning, let the ecclesiastical orders abstain from prostituting their ministry, within the limits of their jurisdiction, by declamations, reproaches, or in any other way; nor ought the ecclesiastical tribunals to interfere in an affair exclusively of the state, and which does not belong to them. If they continue to act as they have heretofore done, they will certainly disgrace their dignity, as experience daily proves; and expose their decrees and censures to the scorn, derision, and contempt, of the people, who, in the mass, are anxiously wishing the success of the country. It being well understood, that, in case the clergy are not thus restrained, we feel no longer answerable for the results that may occur from the enthusiasm and indignation of the people; although, on our part, we protest, now and for ever, our profound respect and veneration for their character and jurisdiction, in matters relating to their ministry. *Eighth.* That, as this is a matter of the greatest importance, and concerns indiscriminately all and every inhabitant of this land, this manifesto and its propositions ought to be published, by means of the public prints of the capital, in order that the people, composed of Americans and Europeans, being informed of what so deeply interests them, may be enabled to point out their will, which ought to be the guide of all our operations. *Ninth.* That, in case none of these plans are admitted, *reprisals shall be rigorously observed.*

" Behold, here, brethren and friends, the propositions we present to you, founded on the principles of natural equity. In one hand, we offer you the olive branch; and in the other, the sword; never losing sight of those bonds by which we

are united, always bearing in mind, that European blood circulates in our veins, and that the same blood which is now so fast shedding, to the great detriment of the monarchy, and for the purpose of maintaining it integral during the absence of the king, is all Spanish. What objection can you have to examine our pretensions? How can you palliate the blind obstinacy of refusing to hear us? Are we, perchance, inferior to the populace of a single town in Spain? and are you of a superior hierarchy to kings? Charles III. descended from his throne, to listen to a plebeian, who spoke in the name of the people of Madrid. To Charles IV. the tumult of Aranjuez cost no less than the abdication of his crown. Is it, then, the Americans alone, when they seek to speak to their brethren, to whom they are in every sense equal, and at a time when the king can no longer be had, who are to be answered with the fire of musketry?

"If, now, when we address you for the last time, since we have often in vain endeavoured to fix your attention, you refuse to admit any of our plans, at least, we shall rest satisfied with having proposed them, in compliance with the most sacred duties, which the good man cannot behold with indifference. In this manner shall we be justified in the eyes of the world, and posterity will not have to accuse us of irregular proceedings. But in this case, remember, there is a severe and supreme Judge, to whom, sooner or later, you will have to give in an account of your operations, and of their results and enormities; of all which, henceforward, we make you answerable. Remember, that the fate of America is not decided; that the combat is not always favourable to you; and that reprisals are, at all times, most terrible. Brethren, friends, and fellow-citizens, let us embrace, and be happy, instead of mutually bringing misfortunes on our heads."

Thus did the Mexicans explain their rights, their wishes, and their loyalty: but these documents, as well as many other attempts at pacification, were always treated by the royalists with scorn. They declared it derogatory to Spanish dignity, to treat with vile and malignant insurgents: they affected to look on the patriots as rebels, unworthy the rights of humanity,

threatening them with total extermination; and, during the reign of the barbarous Calleja, cruelty was clothed in its most terrific garb—every insurgent that fell into their hands, was immediately sacrificed.

Is it a matter of surprise, that, under such deep and dreadful provocations, the Mexican patriots should resort to acts of blood and retaliation? In truth, it was the only mode calculated to repress the savage atrocities of the royalists. The consequences of this retaliatory system, spread with electric rapidity through this once pacific people. Man, by daily witnessing scenes of cruelty, soon becomes callous to the feelings of humanity.

Philanthropists, in their closets, may deplore these excesses, and deprecate the exercise of revenge; but those only, who have been placed in the situation of beholding their families, friends, and companions, butchered in cold blood,—who have seen villages and estates laid waste by fire,—who have witnessed thousands of human beings compelled to fly for refuge among the beasts of the forest, can form an adequate conception of the imperious necessity, and even gratification, accompanying acts of retaliation.

Hidalgo and Morelos, as well as many other patriot chiefs, have given numerous proofs of the exercise of mercy; but rarely indeed has this virtue appeared in the conduct of the royal chiefs. Hundreds of European Spaniards are now living in Mexico, who were taken prisoners on the field of battle; but there breathes scarcely a single insurgent, taken under similar circumstances. During the reign of the Spanish Nero, clemency was a crime; and whenever he heard that any of his officers, in contravention of his orders, had listened to the appeals of a wretched prisoner, he ordered such officer to be dismissed or severely reprimanded, and the victim to be immediately put to death. We were witness to a heart-rending scene of this nature. About forty prisoners, who had been captured several days after an action, and had been found in the woods *unarmed*, were pardoned by a commandant of the royalists, and had been induced by him to enlist among the royal troops. A few days after their enlistment, eight of them

deserted. On the receipt of this intelligence, the viceroy ordered the remaining thirty-two *to be taken from the royal ranks, and shot.* The gallant commandant refused to obey the barbarous mandate, and sent a respectful remonstrance to Calleja on the subject,—the former order was repeated; but, in the meantime, an opportunity was afforded the prisoners to make their escape, which they effected, with the exception of four, who were shot: the commandant was suspended from his command. Were we to relate one-third of the horrors committed by Calleja's orders, they would not only occupy too large a space in our volume, but would appear incredible to our readers. We feel great pleasure, however, in stating, that the successor of Calleja, Don Juan Ruiz de Apodaca, the present viceroy, has displayed a character the reverse of his predecessor; and several of his officers have, on many occasions, given proofs, that a merciful spirit may be found in the breast of a European Spaniard. But such had been the sanguinary education of the officers and soldiers, and such their habitual practice of indiscriminately sacrificing the insurgent prisoners, that, on the part of the royalists, the work of extermination continued to rage with nearly the same fury, as during the first three years of the revolution.

The disgraceful and barbarous warfare, which was adopted in Mexico, and which still rages there and in South America, had its origin solely in the outrageous decrees of the Spanish government, and in the conduct of Spanish officers sent to America to execute those sanguinary mandates. All the offers of Hidalgo, Morelos, and other chiefs, to adopt an exchange of prisoners, and to prosecute the war according to the usages of civilized nations, were invariably treated with contempt by the royalists. Hence has resulted a growing and deadly hatred, on the part of the Americans, against European Spaniards,—an inextinguishable spirit of revenge, which suspends upon a fragile thread the life of every Spaniard in America. This is known and felt by many a Spaniard now residing in Mexico, although the government of Spain appears not yet to be sensible of the important fact. The Indians and Creoles never will, never can, forgive or forget their former

grievances, and the recent cruelties which have been practised on them. It is now too late to attempt to regain the affections or homage of these people; and Spain will, ere long, discover that it is impossible to bind them with their former shackles. To suppose that the fires and eruptions of Mount Etna might be suppressed by throwing a platform of wood over the mouth of the crater, would not be more ridiculous, than to suppose that the population of America, can continue to be controlled by Spain.

In making the preceding remarks, we have been guided by a mass of proofs derived from personal knowledge, and by the careful perusal of authentic documents from royalists and patriots. The development of these facts may excite the displeasure of the Spanish government, and wound the pride of the European Spaniard; but we feel bound to place them before the civilized world, in justice to the much injured inhabitants of Southern America, as well as to perform our duty as a citizen of the United States, and consequently an avowed enemy to all governments inimical to rational freedom.

To return to the operations of Morelos. After the capture of Oaxaca, the numerical strength of his army was much augmented: but the prevalence of inattention to discipline, and the conduct of the officers, in indulging in relaxation in that luxurious climate, combined with the strange and clashing decrees of a legislative body, who were inexperienced as well as deficient in energy, rendered it impossible for Morelos to strike a decisive blow against the enemy. No sooner did he and his officers form any military plan, than its merits became the subject of discussion in the Mexican congress, and thus was rendered ineffectual by delay, or became known to the enemy. The Spanish government put in motion every engine of intrigue, to gain over to its interests part of the members of the Mexican congress; and some intercepted despatches, which fell into the hands of the patriot chiefs, unfolded to them the weakness, or rather treachery, of several distinguished individuals of their own party. Jealousy, of course, ensued; confidence was shaken between the military and civil authori-

ties, and hence originated the train of serious disasters, which will be related in the sequel.

Morelos, on learning that the royalists had retaken Valladolid, and strongly fortified it, marched to effect its reduction, without reflecting that his army was generally composed of the natives of Tierra Calienta, and consequently not adapted to carry on warfare in the cold regions. His attempt, therefore, on Valladolid, was not only unsuccessful, but he lost a great number of men, and was compelled to make a precipitate retreat to the warm country.

The royalists now became animated with fresh courage, and determined on pursuing the patriot army. At the hacienda of *Puruaran*, they met a division under the command of the patriot general Matamoros. The royalists began the combat with great fury, while the patriots defended themselves with such obstinacy, that almost every individual of the division was cut to pieces, and the general remained a prisoner in the hands of the royalists.

Matamoros was a priest, and had, on several occasions, displayed great valour, and more military talent than any other officer in the patriot service. It is generally believed, that if he had enjoyed the supreme command, instead of the second rank, he would have pursued a very different, and probably a more successful course, than that which Morelos had adopted.

The official despatches of the royalists, on the capture of Matamoros, evince the high opinion they entertained of him. They refused an offer made by Morelos, to exchange several Spanish officers and men, whom he then held as prisoners, for the captured general, and although the former threatened to make a dreadful retaliation, in case Matamoros was sacrificed, yet the royalists, in despite of offers and menaces, caused him to be shot.

Morelos, after experiencing many disasters and difficulties, finding that the province of Valladolid was not a suitable theatre for his army, nor a place of security for the residence of the Mexican congress, which then held its sessions at a place called *Ario*, resolved on transferring his head quarters to the city of *Tehuacan*, in the province of *La Puebla*, where the

patriot chief Teran had a respectable division. With this view, he put his army in motion, taking with him the members of congress, and a great number of women and children. We have been informed, by several persons who accompanied that expedition, that it resembled more the emigration of a vast body of people, than the march of an army. The road, for several leagues, was covered with baggage wagons and mules: no order was observed on the march; and the military forces were so scattered, that, in case of an attack, it would have been impracticable to form a junction with promptitude. Morelos does not appear to have made the least calculation on being assaulted: he conceived that such was his superiority of numbers, that the royalists would not dare to molest him on his route. He continued his march, without opposition, for several days. He at length separated from the main body of his army, and reached a place called *Tepecuacuilco*, with a small division of cavalry. He there made a halt, intending to remain until his main force should come up.

The royalists, in the meantime, had gained intelligence, by means of spies, whom they had placed in Morelos' army, of all his movements; and, although they had several times appeared on his flanks and rear during the march, yet they had not shown a disposition to bring him to action. No sooner, however, were they informed that Morelos, with his small party of cavalry, had detached himself from his main body, than they resolved to seize on the advantage thus offered to them. They accordingly pushed on, and came up with him at Tepecuacuilco. After a short combat, Morelos was taken prisoner, on the 5th of November, 1815. He was sent to Mexico, and delivered over to the Holy Office. The cities and towns in the kingdom, in possession of the royalists, gave way to the most extravagant demonstrations of joy, on the capture of the patriot chief. This event they considered as the termination of the contest.

The Inquisition acted a conspicuous part. After declaring Morelos *a herctic*, and degrading him, with all its solemn forms, that tribunal delivered him over to the military authority, which, in its turn, declared him a traitor, and sentenced

him to be shot. The sentence was carried into effect, on the 22d of December, 1815, at *San Christoval*, in the environs of the city of Mexico.

On this occasion, there was published a document, with the signature of Morelos, in which he was represented as making a solemn recantation of his errors; as exhorting his deluded countrymen to return to their allegiance to the Spanish government; and, after imploring the forgiveness of his God and his king, acknowledging the justice of the punishment he was about to suffer. There was likewise published another document, wherein he offered, that if the viceroy would grant him his life, *he would engage effectually to quell the insurrection.*

Both these documents have been declared by the patriots to be forgeries of the royalists; and in support of this assertion, they have published some very able papers. Indeed, some of the royalists, who were present at the execution of Morelos, have had the candour to acknowledge, that he died in the most heroic manner, fervently praying for the emancipation of his country, and sternly refusing to answer any interrogatories, tending to compromise the safety, or to develop the views, of the patriots.

The death of Morelos was a serious blow to the cause of his party, as he was the only one, among their chiefs, whose orders were implicitly obeyed. The forces under his command were much better organized than any other troops in the country; and they had, on several occasions, displayed great valour, particularly in the siege of *Zitaquaro*, where they gained a victory over a superiority of numbers. The memorable siege of Acapulco, which occupied *fifteen months*, evidenced the great influence that Morelos possessed over his army; for otherwise it would have been impossible, in such a climate, to cause raw troops to display so much perseverance. In fact, all the royalists, with whom the writer conversed, expressed their belief, that, had Morelos safely reached Tehuacan, and there concentrated the divisions of the other patriot chiefs, he would have been able, in a few weeks, to have destroyed any force that the royalists, at that time, could have brought against them.

In proportion as the death of Morelos excited fresh courage among the royalists, it occasioned depression and confusion among the patriots. Dissensions took place in the Mexican congress; while, among the military chieftains, ambition to obtain the supreme command became the dominant passion. Each refused to act in concert with the other, and endeavoured to promote his separate interests at the expense of those of his country.

The royalists were not idle, at this juncture. They knew that the continuance of their power depended upon keeping up this spirit of jealousy among the patriot chiefs; and they employed bribery, and every other available means, to prevent a union of the revolutionists, well knowing, that so long as they remained scattered in divisions throughout the provinces, it would be easy to beat them in detail.

The fatal consequences flowing from these dissensions among the patriots, will be found detailed, in their proper place, in the sequel.

The members of the Mexican congress, after the capture of Morelos, pursued their route to Tehuacan, where they arrived, and began to exercise their legislative functions, by issuing decrees, which were obeyed, or disregarded, as suited the interests or inclinations of the military commandants to whom they were addressed.

Don Manuel Mici y Teran, the commander-in-chief at Tehuacan, was viewed with a jealous eye by several members of the congress; and he discovered their intentions to deprive him of his command. As the officers and soldiers of Teran were devoted to him, and as he conceived that he was likely to fall a victim to the intrigues of the congress, he resolved on the bold step of dissolving that body, and of seizing the persons of the members. Accordingly, he sent a military force to the house where they were assembled, and put them all under arrest. We have seen his manifesto, in justification of this daring act; and although we do not pretend to decide that his alleged reasons for the measure are perfectly satisfactory, yet his subsequent conduct proved that he was not guided by any views hostile to the welfare of his country. Neither does he

appear to have dishonoured his character, by any act of revenge against those members of the congress who had previously determined on his destruction; but, on the contrary, although they were completely in his power, he liberated them all, gave some of them money, and permitted them to depart from Tehuacan, and proceed to any place they thought proper.

The dissolution of the Mexican congress, by this arbitrary act of Teran, was, however, a fatal event to the cause of the patriots; for, the military commanders, in the different provinces, no longer considering themselves subservient to any orders, openly assumed the character of independent chiefs in their respective jurisdictions. They all avowed a deadly hostility to Teran. The extraordinary character of this man, who had not only to contend against the royalists, but likewise against the machinations of his compatriots, will be described in our subsequent details of the revolution.

At the time that the revolutionary cause in Mexico assumed this gloomy and desperate aspect, the gallant Spanish general Mina was forming a project, in London, in its favour. This brave youth had rendered eminent services to his native country, and had been a principal instrument in frustrating the designs of the emperor Napoleon, with regard to Spain. His distinguished services were requited by the ungrateful Ferdinand, in the manner which will be detailed in the following chapter.

Prior to Mina's departure from London, he had received some accounts of the disasters in Mexico, which we have briefly noticed: but, so far from his ardour being damped by the unpropitious intelligence, it appeared to furnish him with new incentives to resume his deeds of hardihood and valour, in the cause of an oppressed people. The constancy of this high-minded Spaniard, struggling with obstacles almost insurmountable, has rarely been equalled—never excelled.

The reader will find, in the annexed biographical sketch of Mina, and in the relation of his daring exploits in Mexico, the portrait of a hero, worthy of occupying, on the page of history, a distinguished rank among the martyrs of liberty.

CHAPTER III.

General Mina—His early life, and career in Spain—His motives for embarking in the cause of Mexico—Arrival at, and transactions in Baltimore—Departure of the Expedition—Occurrences at Port au Prince—Arrival of the Expedition at Galvezton—Treachery of Correa—Departure of the Expedition from Galvezton, and its arrival off the bar of the River Santander—Disembarkation of the Division.

DON XAVIER MINA was born in the month of December, 1789. He was the eldest son of a well-born and respected proprietary, whose domains lay near the town of Monreal, in the kingdom of Navarre. Brought up among the mountains of his native province, he was accustomed to wander through their rich vallies, and to pursue the chase amidst the grandeur of the Pyrenees. His faculties, thus nurtured and exercised, expanded themselves at an early period, while his mind imbibed all the energy of an unconquerable boldness. The wild aspect, the rugged scenery of an Alpine country, and the cheerful and buoyant feelings they excite, are well known to have a powerful effect upon the formation of character. It is there that the simple mountaineer, removed from the influence of the refinements of society, escapes its corruption; and we find the elevated valley "dignified as the abode of bravery and virtue." It is there, that the elements of great and noble daring are cherished; that patriotism is a feeling of spontaneous growth; and thence have sprung those heroic spirits, whose exalted deeds have shed a lustre on humanity.

The early studies of Mina were pursued at Pampeluna and at Saragossa. In 1808, at the commencement of the resistance of the Spaniards to the French invasion, he was a student in the university of Saragossa. At that period, between eighteen and nineteen years of age, he felt the strong enthu-

siasm of the times. When the massacre at Madrid, of the 2d of May, shook all Spain, and the cry of vengeance was heard from the Ebro to the Guadiana, he abandoned his studies, joined the army of the north of Spain, as a volunteer, and was present at the battles of Alcornes, Maria, and Belchite. The events of that period are still fresh in our remembrance:—the general rising of the Spanish nation, and the awakening of the heroism of the Spanish people, from the slumber in which it had been spell-bound, since the days of Charles V.

Irritated at the capture of his armies, Napoleon, at this time, began to pour fresh troops into Spain; and it became particularly important to the Spaniards to have a communication with France, as the means of procuring intelligence. The gallant young Mina undertook the enterprise. Availing himself of his knowledge of the country, the peasantry, and the passes of the mountains, he executed it with complete success; establishing a secret communication with the provinces of France, adjacent to the Pyrenees, by which much valuable information, of what was passing in France, was obtained by the Spanish generals.

The Spanish armies, however, were unable to cope with the numerous and veteran troops with which Napoleon overspread the country, and, being defeated in every regular encounter, they retreated before the French.

The Catalonian army, after the defeat at Belchite, a town to the southward of Saragossa, fell back to Tortosá, while the French occupied a line extending in the direction of the southern frontier of Arragon, into Catalonia.

It was in this gloomy situation of affairs, that Xavier Mina formed a determination, which had the most important effects, not only upon his own fortune in life, but upon the whole war in Spain. He resolved to pass through the line of the French position, and, gaining his native province of Navarre, to make its mountains and fastnesses the theatre of his hostile operations; to hang on the rear of the invaders, to intercept their convoys and couriers, and to cut off their straggling detachments.

In an evening walk he first communicated, to a friend and kinsman, his plans and schemes; and unfolded, with enthusiasm, his hopes, and fears, and visions of glory. His kinsman heard him to the end in silence, and then pointing to a gibbet which stood near, "If you succeed, it will be great: if you fail, there is your portion," was his reply. In answer to his solicitation to be permitted to put his plans in execution, the Spanish general told him it would only be throwing away his life, as he would be cut off from the army; "*I do not*," said Mina, "*think I am cut off, so long as I can find a path for my horse.*" Finally, he left Tortosá with *twelve men*, and, passing with skill through the line occupied by the French army, arrived in Navarre. Of those twelve, one is at present a lieutenant; another has retired with nine wounds; and the rest fell in battle.

The first attempt of Mina was upon a small guard of a dozen French. He attacked them with about twenty men, and captured them without much resistance. The next, was on a party of thirty men. The Spaniards, who had nearly the same number, lay concealed behind a stone wall; upon the approach of the enemy, they rose and fired. In the contest which ensued, a tall grenadier fired at Mina with deliberate aim, and, taking shelter behind a tree, encouraged his party. But the Spaniards, leaping the wall, rushed on, and settled the combat with their sabres. This successful beginning produced the most important results. The spirits of the peasantry were roused; many successful adventures took place; the French foraging parties were cut to pieces; their convoys attacked and plundered; and their couriers intercepted. The Spanish government had scarcely finished their rejoicing for the first successes of Mina, when they were again surprised by his sending them a large body of prisoners, among whom was a lieutenant colonel; and, at another time, *seven hundred* prisoners, with a quantity of military equipments, stores, and money.

The French were not passive spectators of these chivalrous exploits. Upwards of thirty individuals, nearly or remotely connected with Mina's family, were suddenly arrested, and

sent into France. War, with all the meliorations introduced by modern civilization, is sufficiently terrible to a reflecting mind; but it is in those political struggles, where the relations and kindred of an individual, are made answerable for his opinions and acts, that it comes armed with its severest afflictions. Among the relatives of Mina, thus torn from their country, was an accomplished young lady, the object of his early attachment. Separated from each other, time, and the waves of an adverse fortune, bore them still farther asunder, and the tender affections, the sport of events, sunk, and were lost for ever.

Repeated expeditions were undertaken to destroy Mina, but the affections of every peasant being with him, and having correct intelligence of every movement, he was enabled, not only to baffle and elude his enemy, but frequently coming on them by surprise, to defeat and destroy his pursuers. When he found their forces too numerous to be openly resisted, he appointed a place of rendezvous, dispersed his band, and, separating from each other, they eluded pursuit. The armed mountaineers retired to their homes, or to secret recesses, and there waited till their leader gave the signal; when, suddenly re-appearing, they seemed to spring from the earth, like the men of Cadmus, a legion of soldiers. Mina, with a select band, the nucleus of his army, retired to the mountains. A hill, near his father's mansion, was his principal retreat. He was familiar with its fastnesses, and solitary recesses, and the neglected flocks of his own family, furnished him and his brave companions with food. When he determined on striking a blow, he gathered his forces like a tempest on the mountain top, and, descending in terror, swept the province to the very gates of Pampeluna.

In this manner was begun the insurrection in the province of Navarre. From this period, bands of guerillas were organized throughout the country. Thus commenced that system, which was the great means of keeping up the spirit of desperate animosity, and which became, eventually, the principal means of delivering Spain from her invaders. The accounts of Mina's successes ran through the country, and produced a powerful

excitement in the minds of the people. He was thence soon enabled to raise a respectable division of troops, whose numbers were increased by the peasantry, whenever it was contemplated to strike a blow.

The central junta of Seville conferred on him the rank of colonel, and, soon after, the dignity of commandant general of Navarre. The junta of Arragon also appointed him commanding general of upper Arragon. He won these honours most gallantly by his sword, in a gloomy and desperate hour; they were confirmed to him by his country; and he continued his brilliant career, lighting up an hostility and daring resistance, which has made the French invasion of Spain one of the most remarkable events in the history of modern Europe.

In the winter of 1810—11, Mina was directed by the Spanish government to destroy, if possible, an iron foundry near Pampeluna, from which the French were supplied with a number of articles for the service of the war. Whether it was from one of those accidents which no prudence can foresee, or that the enemy had obtained information of his movements, this unfortunate enterprise was fatal to Mina. Two strong bodies of French troops, on their march in contrary directions, arrived at the same time at the two entrances of a narrow valley. Mina and his corps, who were then in the defile, were completely enclosed. The fight that ensued was obstinate and bloody. The gallant Mina, defending himself with his sword, fell, pierced with wounds, a prisoner, into the hands of the enemy.

Thus ended the rapid but brilliant career of Xavier Mina in Spain. Fortune, as if jealous of the skill and heroism which threatened to raise him above her capricious favours, played him false at last. But the spirit which he had raised was still alive; the rage of his warrior mountaineers was kindled, and they chose one of his family to lead them to revenge. His uncle *Espoz* was the chief whom they selected, and he proved himself worthy of the high trust. He stands first among those, whose names are chaunted through Spain, in the hymns of triumph of a delivered people. He watched faithfully through the dark and perilous night, which overhung his coun-

try, and when the morning of her deliverance broke, Espoz was seen chasing the last Frenchman from Spain. But let not the full glory of the uncle, diminish that of the nephew. Xavier Mina was less fortunate, but not less deserving, than Espoz. *Ego feci, tulit alter honores.* It was Xavier, who first taught the mountaineers of his province where to strike at the invader, and gave system to their irregular valour. He encouraged, by his successes, the Spaniards to follow his daring example; he braved the terrors of Napoleon's vengeance; and opened, with his sword, the path which led to the deliverance of his country. He was not one and twenty when taken prisoner. What might not have been expected from this heroic youth, if his career had been continued?

Mina was taken to Paris, after his capture, and shut up in the castle of Vincennes. The afflictions, which press upon the unfortunate state prisoner, were aggravated to him, by the care with which all intelligence of the fate of his relations, or struggling country, was concealed from him. His hair came out, and his person was completely changed. In time, however, the rigours of his imprisonment were softened, and books were given him. He applied himself, with great industry, to the study of the military art, in which he derived great assistance from some of the veteran officers, who were his fellow-prisoners. He remained in Vincennes till the allied armies entered France, nor was he set at liberty until the general peace, which took place upon the abdication of the emperor Napoleon.

It is well known, that king Ferdinand, on his return to Spain, was met by a deputation, bearing for his approval, the constitution under which Spain had been governed, during the captivity of the king; a constitution that was founded on the basis of a meliorated and limited monarchy. It was formed to meet the liberal opinions of enlightened Spaniards, and those changes which the age, and modern ideas, demanded. One, out of the many instances of this melioration, may be cited from article No. 304, which for ever abolishes all confiscation of the property of the person condemned for crimes against the state; and the humane reason assigned is, that confiscation is a punishment of the innocent children, and not

of the criminal. Nor will the merit of this distinction be fully understood, until we reflect that there is scarcely a state or kingdom in Europe, in which the contrary doctrine is not held.

The conduct of Ferdinand, on his return to Spain, is well known to the world. The sympathies of the liberal and enlightened, once so strong in his favour, in every country, have been destroyed by the persecution of the Cortes, and the proscription of the patriot leaders; by the prohibition of foreign books and journals; by the destruction of the opening sources of national improvement; and by the revival of the Inquisition, with its demon train of judicial murders and midnight tortures. The dungeons of the Holy Office, the fortifications and gallies, in which soldiers of honour were condemned to work with the vilest criminals, and the list of banishments, confiscations, and executions, forcibly show, in what manner bigotry and political interest will destroy the most generous feelings, and sanction the vilest ingratitude.

Being conspicuous members of the party of *Liberales*, or *Constitutionalists*, the two Minas soon experienced the displeasure of the court, and the frowns of the king. Xavier, however, was offered the command of the military forces in Mexico, a situation next to that of the viceroy of New Spain. He declined it; and, being apprehensive of the consequences, retired into Navarre. Espoz y Mina, who still remained at the head of his mountain warriors in Navarre, immediately received an order, depriving him of his command. Matters being thus brought to a crisis, it was determined by the two Minas to raise the standard of the Cortes and the constitution. They had no time to form any extensive plan. It was agreed to strike immediately, before the order depriving Espoz of his command should be publicly known. The details of this bold attempt are interesting, and present some features of romance; but we can only glance slightly at them. While Espoz was to put his troops in motion, that he might arrive, at a concerted hour, under the walls of Pampeluna, Xavier Mina entered the fortress. There, he soon communicated with a few officers, who were known to him, and whose sentiments

were favourable to the Cortes. Popular in the whole Spanish army, and his name endeared to those soldiers of freedom, he selected a few of them to be his guests at a convivial banquet. After supper, as the time drew nigh, Mina rose up suddenly amidst them; addressed them in a nervous and enthusiastic harangue; unfolded the ingratitude and injustice of the court; and, finally, exhorted them to give the blessings of freedom to the country they had saved. The effect was electric and complete. They arose, and crossing their swords, as they stood around the banqueting table, swore to be faithful. The sentinels on the appointed bastion were withdrawn; the ladders were fixed; and, from the dead of night, almost till the dawn, they waited, with breathless anxiety, the approach of the troops under Espoz y Mina. Had they then arrived, a new era, pregnant with important events, would have opened on Spain.

The causes which led to the failure of the enterprise were partly accidental, and implicate the policy, not the bravery, of Espoz. It is now understood, that the troops, instead of being excited and stimulated for such an occasion, by his orders were rigidly kept from liquor and refreshment. They were altogether ignorant of the reason and nature of an expedition, so strange to them, in time of peace; and, after marching till a late hour in the night, they began to murmur; some confusion arose in a corps whose commander was unpopular; the march was delayed; a nocturnal tumult ensued; and the soldiers lay down in scattered parties in the fields, or wandered in search of refreshments. Espoz, who had rode on ahead, found, on his return, in the darkness of the night, a scene of confusion, to remedy which, all his exertions were baffled. It was irremediable, and the opportunity was lost. The confederates in Pampeluna speedily received the fatal intelligence, and immediately quitted the fortress.

Although the Spaniards are accustomed to obedience, and "the king's name is a tower of strength," yet, on this occasion, they scorned to do any injury to their generals. Xavier Mina traversed the whole province in safety, collected all those friends whom he thought might be compromitted by his

attempt, and entered France in full uniform, with thirty officers. He was arrested by the orders of the French government, and imprisoned near Bayonne, but was afterwards liberated, and passed over to England. From the British government he received a liberal pension; we believe, two thousand pounds sterling per annum.

During his sojourn in England, he was treated by several eminent personages with flattering attentions; but particularly by an English nobleman, alike distinguished for his attachment to the cause of freedom throughout the world, and his urbanity to strangers. By this nobleman, Mina was made acquainted with general Scott, of the army of the United States, then on a visit to England. He was also furnished with a ship, arms, and military stores, by some English gentlemen attached to the cause of freedom, to enable him to prosecute an enterprise he had been some time meditating, against the kingdom of Mexico, as the quarter whence the most severe blow could be struck against the tyranny of Ferdinand.

Mina, in drawing his sword in favour of the independence of Mexico, considered he was espousing a cause, consonant with those sacred principles, for which he became an exile. Power and place might have been his, if he had chosen to float in the eddy of court favour; but his character and principles forbade him. He believed, with many of the philosophers of the last century, and with some of the enlightened men of his own country, that the treasures of the New World had a fatal effect on the prosperity and glory of Spain; therefore, he cannot be justly accused of doing a wilful injury to his own country. Nor did he owe allegiance to the ungrateful Ferdinand. An exile, cut off from every tie, by the act of a sovereign who had set a price upon his head, there was no longer any ligament to bind him to the throne of Ferdinand, nor any rule, even in the forgotten code of villainage, to forbid his embarking in the glorious cause of the emancipation of Mexico. He did not, like Coriolanus, league with his country's enemies, nor, like Eugene, devote himself to a foreign court. Defeated in his attempt to uphold the Cortes, and the cause of Span-

ish freedom in Europe, he devoted himself to the cause of liberty in America. He boldly entered on a dangerous and desperate path of toil, bearing in his view the prospect of that fate, which once menaced a Hancock and a Washington; and which overtook a Fitzgerald and an Emmett.

The pretensions of Spain, to the dominion and rule of the vast regions of the New World, are too lofty and extravagant for the jurists of the nineteenth century. The time has gone by, when the decrees of the court of Madrid, and the bulls of a Pope, are to be obeyed and worshipped as infallible mandates, by sixteen millions of the human race, on the continent of America. Spain has, it is true, by a watchful jealousy; by the discouragement of learning, of commerce, and of improvement; by a persecuting hierarchy; and by the dreadful tribunal of the Inquisition; bound the inhabitants of Spanish America in strong fetters. But, the voice of that spirit which echoed along the Allegany in '76, has already been heard on the Table Land of Mexico, is now rolling among the Andes, and will, ere long, break the chains of servitude for ever.

We are aware, that many circumstances, which gave a peculiar character to the contest of the North American colonies for independence, do not exist with regard to the South Americans. The English and Spanish colonies were planted in a manner as widely different, as the characters of Cortez and Pizarro, were from those of Sir Walter Raleigh and William Penn. On the basis of equal laws, trial by jury, liberty of person, conscience, and speech, a beautiful fabric of society had been erected in the British American colonies; and the declaration of independence was the Corinthian capital, which decorated and finished the columns of the temple.

The revolutions in Spanish America, on the contrary, are at this moment affording a signal proof of the effect of early dispositions, implanted in nations, and perhaps, (although the opinion may not be in accordance with the sentiments of some modern philosophers) of the punishment which national crime prepares for posterity. The predictions of the benevolent and venerable Las Casas have already been fulfilled. A desolating civil war has acquired, from the oppression of a tyran-

nic government, and the cruel disposition which has been encouraged in the mass of the people, uncommon features of horror. The frequent refusal of quarter, the sacrifice of persons in cold blood, the proscription and destruction of whole districts, the mutilations and butchery of females and children, avenge, terribly avenge the sufferings of the simple and peaceable aborigines, as well as the outrages under which the Creoles have been so long groaning.

It is a political fact, now admitted to be true in its utmost extent, that the government of Spain, over her American colonies, was worse than any other recorded in the page of history. In vain have her apologists referred us to the ponderous volumes of "*Las Leyes de las Indias*," or to her ecclesiastical regulations, for proofs of her moderation and wisdom. We have an unerring and melancholy proof, in the past and present condition of society in those regions, of the pestilential influence of the Spanish government. It has, in every way, tended to awe, to depress, and to brutalize the people; to cut off all means of improvement; to destroy in its infancy every germe of melioration, and to deprive them of the many physical blessings which their great country afforded them.

In the vast empire of New Spain, containing nearly seven millions of people, there is but one public journal, and that newspaper is printed under the immediate control of a vigilant and jealous government. No foreign or domestic intelligence is ever inserted in this paper, but such as comports with the spirit and policy of the government. In this state of wretchedness and ignorance, has the great mass of society been kept, in Spanish America, for near three hundred years.

A great change, however, has taken place within the last ten years, and every friend of humanity must rejoice, that the emancipation of South America and Mexico, from Spanish thraldom, is an event now no longer doubtful. It may be retarded to a period more distant, than many sanguine friends of the cause suppose; but every day unfolds new evidences, not only of the impracticability of Spain ever re-subjugating such of the colonies as are already in open revolt, but also of the very

precarious tenure, on which she holds her dominion over certain sections that still acknowledge her sovereignty.

This important fact will be more clearly developed in the following narrative of Mina's expedition, and although the gallant youth and his brave companions have been sacrificed, they have perished in a noble cause. We shall demonstrate, by a plain statement of the extraordinary circumstances relating to that expedition, that had Mina landed with fifteen hundred or two thousand soldiers, instead of *two hundred and seventy*, in any part of the Mexican kingdom, he could have marched direct upon the city of Mexico, and overturned the Spanish government almost without a struggle. We are aware, that this assertion will surprise those who are uninformed of the character and feelings of the Mexican people; and we are likewise aware, that the truths we are about to develop, will be a source of mortification to the pride of the Spanish government; but, be that as it may, we pledge ourselves for the fidelity of the narration, and leave the intelligent reader to draw his own conclusions.

General Mina had originally intended, and made his arrangements to proceed direct to the Mexican coast, conceiving that the inhabitants generally would rise in his favour; but, altering his plan a short time prior to his departure, in consequence of a part of his plans in Europe being frustrated, and some information that he received from a respectable source, he sailed from England, for the Chesapeake, in the month of May, 1816, accompanied by thirteen Spanish and Italian, and two English officers.

After a passage of forty-six days, the ship arrived in Hampton Roads. The general disembarked at Norfolk, whence he proceeded by land to Baltimore, at which city the ship arrived on the 3d of July. Mina here made an arrangement for a fast sailing brig, pierced for guns; and purchased a quantity of field and battering artillery, mortars, ammunition, clothing, and military stores of every description. While these preparations were making, the ship was put in a state for the accommodation of passengers; and the general visited Philadel-

phia and New York, where several Americans and Europeans volunteered their services, as officers, to accompany him. He was not desirous of augmenting his force, except as to officers, being under the impression, as before remarked, that he would be joined by the natives, on landing in Mexico. He obtained every possible information of the state of things in that country; and ascertained that a small place on the Mexican coast, to the northward of Vera Cruz, called *Boquilla de Piedras*, was fortified, and still held by the patriot general *Don Guadalupe Victoria.* He also learned, that, although the patriots had met with recent disasters, yet they still maintained several strong guerilla parties in the different provinces.

In the meantime, many attempts were made, by the representative of the Spanish government, to destroy the expedition. During the passage from England, some of the Spanish officers had a dispute with the general; four of whom, on their arrival in the United States, presented themselves to Don Luis de Onis, the Spanish minister, and gave such information as they possessed, relative to the general's intended operations. Although their communications were crude, enough was imparted to awaken the jealousy and suspicion of the minister, who, ever on the alert to support the dignity and interest of his master Ferdinand, immediately addressed the American government, representing the nature of the information he had received, and calling upon it to suppress the threatened undertaking of Mina: but, as the complaints of the minister were not sustained by any positive data, and as the existing laws did not prohibit the exportation of military stores, nor the sailing of American vessels to any part of the world in amity with the United States, for commercial objects; and as the rights of hospitality were alike extended to all parties, the executive did not think proper to interfere, as long as the general and his agents moved within the sphere of the laws of the republic.

The Spanish consul at Baltimore, having understood the intended object of the ship from the steward, who ran away from her, and who, understanding Spanish, had overheard the conversation of the malecontents on the voyage, applied to the

British consul for his official assistance in ridding the Spanish government of its cause of alarm. It is yet doubtful, in the mind of the writer, whether the Spanish representative surpassed the British consul, in this instance, in strenuous exertions in the cause of Ferdinand VII. He ostensibly attached more credit to the bare *ipse dixit* of a worthless deserter, than to the papers and documents of the ship; and, without any other proof that her destination was illicit, than that of the assertions of known mutineers, he, of himself, unjustifiably assumed a high jurisdiction in a neutral country, whose government had withheld its interference: and, although the ship had not been employed in any respect in contravention to the British laws, and it could not be established that it was intended that she should be so employed, while she wore a British flag, he endeavoured to throw obstacles in the way of her voyage. In fact, the British consul acted, in this business, more like the representative of the Spanish, than the consul of a free government; and, at all events, it indicated his hostility to the cause of liberty in Spanish America.

A quantity of military stores were put on board the ship, as cargo; and the passengers, destined to embark in her, being in readiness, she took from the custom-house a clearance for St. Thomas, and proceeded outside of fort M'Henry, where she anchored: but it was not without some difficulty that the British consul was induced, even then, to relinquish his hold on the papers.

On the evening of the 28th of August, the passengers, in number about two hundred, embarked, under the direction of colonel the count de Ruuth. Mina remained to go out in the brig, whose cargo was not quite ready. The ship was ordered to proceed to Port au Prince, there to await the arrival of the general.

The ship left the capes of Virginia, on the 1st of September, in company with a Spanish schooner, which had been hired by Mina, and on board of which was lieutenant-colonel Myers, of the artillery, with his company; but, a night or two after sailing, this vessel separated from the ship, and proceeded to the rendezvous.

After a passage of seventeen days, the ship arrived at Port au Prince, where she found her consort the schooner. The following night, the island was visited by one of those destructive hurricanes common to the West Indies. Amid the scene of general havoc, the ship sustained her portion of damage. She parted one of her cables, drove with another ahead, and got foul of a Haytian frigate, of thirty-two guns; in consequence of which, the foremast, maintopmast, and several spars, were carried away, besides considerable injury sustained in the hull; and the frigate lost her three masts by the board. The ship, however, hooking the frigate's moorings, held on; and, about three o'clock, the gale abated. Day-light offered to view the melancholy scene of the ship dismasted, and the schooner, her consort, upset and grounded on a shoal.

The storm having abated, the passengers were landed in the course of the forenoon, and the ship was then hauled into the inner harbour. The misfortune which had befallen her bore a serious aspect; it being feared, that it would be impracticable to repair her; however, these apprehensions were soon relieved, by the generous conduct of the late president of the republic, by whom spars were furnished, the use of the arsenal was granted, and every facility afforded.

The brig being ready for sea, the general and staff embarked, and sailed from Baltimore, on the 27th of September. During his stay in that city, the simplicity and modesty of his demeanour, the honesty of his transactions, and his gentlemanly deportment, had gained him the esteem of a considerable portion of its society. He was applied to, while in the United States, to lend his assistance to the equipping of South American privateers; and, though the offer was highly advantageous, he refused it with indignation: "What reason," said he, "have you to suppose that Xavier Mina would plunder his unoffending countrymen? I war against Ferdinand and tyranny, not against Spaniards."

While the ship was refitting, general Mina arrived at Port au Prince. Although he was much chagrined by the late disaster, and the delay and expense resulting therefrom, yet, by his activity and perseverance, he soon surmounted this first

obstacle to his expedition. He was received with particular attention by general Petion, who afforded him every assistance in his power.

In this place, several individuals, both Americans and Europeans, abandoned the expedition. In some few instances, they were prevented from accompanying it by sickness; but the majority of them assigned reasons, in extenuation of their conduct, which should have been seriously considered before they volunteered. Mina viewed their defection with merited disregard; observing, that he wished none to follow his fortunes, but such as would voluntarily and cheerfully devote themselves to the cause of liberty. This loss was, however, in some measure counterbalanced by the acquisition of some seamen, who had deserted from a French frigate, then laying in the roads.

The general had understood, that commodore Aury, a patriot naval commander, was cruising in the Bay of Mexico, and that he had formed an establishment on the island of San Luis, at the mouth of the river La Trinidad. Thither he determined to repair, under the expectation that his views would be promoted by that officer. Having engaged a small schooner, in lieu of the Spanish vessel which had upset during the late hurricane, and the ship being refitted in the best possible manner, the expedition, consisting of the brig, ship, and schooner, on the 24th of October, made sail for the island of San Luis, on the Mexican coast.

Misfortune seems to have accompanied the expedition, from the date of the ship's arrival at Hayti. After leaving Port au Prince, an almost continual calm was experienced, so that the expedition was thirty days in performing a voyage, which, with the usual sea breeze in those latitudes, could have been made in ten or twelve. The tediousness of the voyage was, however, a light evil, compared with others which the expedition was doomed to suffer. That dreadful contagion, the yellow fever, broke out on board the ship. It had been brought from the shore by one of the passengers, who died a few days after sailing. The infection spread to the other vessels. The brig, not being crowded,

suffered little, losing only one man. The ship's sick list was soon swelled to fifty and sixty daily: however, not more than seven or eight died. But on board the schooner, where the air was confined, a melancholy scene ensued: of the few on board, eight died, among whom was lieutenant-colonel Daly. At last, the brig was obliged to take her in tow, as there was not an individual on board free from the fever, except a black woman. Indeed, had it not been for the exertions of an excellent physician, it is probable the expedition would have been destroyed. This worthy man, Dr. John Hennessy, formerly of Kingston, Jamaica, did not merely give evidence of his professional skill, but his indefatigable activity, and sympathizing attentions, were unremitting, and endeared him to every individual of the expedition. The vessels arrived at the Grand Cayman island, where a plentiful supply of turtle was procured; which, together with cool northerly breezes, soon rendered the passengers convalescent. At this island, they who were on board the schooner represented to the general, that it was impossible for them to proceed any farther in that ill-fated vessel. Orders were therefore given, that those, who were reported to be free from fever, should be passed on board the ship; while the schooner, with her sick, went into the Grand Cayman. The ship and brig proceeded on their course, and arrived off the encampment at San Luis, on the 24th of November, after a distressing passage of thirty days.

The general here met with commodore Aury; and, as the north winds, which render the Mexican coast very dangerous, then prevailed, an order was given for the landing of the expedition. As there was not sufficient water on the bar to admit the vessels, measures were taken to unload them; and an old hulk, lying in the harbour, was appropriated, by the commodore, for the reception of the stores.

The settlement, called Galvezton, was established on the east end of the island. The entrance into the harbour is defended by a bar, capable of admitting vessels of easy draft, there being twelve feet of water on it; but the swell often renders the channel dangerous. Inside the bar, there is a good depth of water, up to the settlement; but the bay, into which

the river La Trinidad disembogues, is in many parts very shoal. The island is low; and the water, which is obtained by digging in the sand, is brackish. A plenty of good water may, however, be obtained in the cane brakes, at some distance from Galvezton, where the shipping usually fill their casks. The island is intersected by large bayous. It is covered with long prairie grass; and abounds with deer and wild fowls; while the bay yields fine fish, and the bayous excellent oysters.

As soon as the troops were landed, an encampment was laid out, and the tents were pitched. On the west side of Galvezton, commodore Aury had commenced throwing up a mud fort; and, to the westward of this, was Mina's encampment. The requisite arms were served out, two field-pieces and two howitzers were landed, and the engineer department was diligently employed in preparing fixed ammunition; the mechanics were set to work, clothing was served out to the men, and the officers were furnished with their respective uniforms. The commodore supplied the division with rations of excellent fresh bread, salt beef, pork, fish, oil, and brandy; which, with the game, and the supplies brought by the coasters, enabled the division to fare well.

In the meantime, the ship and brig, as it was unsafe to keep them at anchorage on the coast, had been ordered to proceed to New Orleans.

The immediate attention of the general was directed to the organization of his regiments. Officers were appointed to the different corps, which it was expected would be filled up soon after the descent should be made. The American officers, who did not understand the Spanish language, were formed into a company, styled, "the Guard of Honour of the Mexican Congress," of which the general was captain, a colonel the lieutenant, and so on. Colonel Young, an officer who had distinguished himself in the service of the United States, and whose gallantry and activity we shall have occasion hereafter to notice, was subsequently placed in command of this company. The numbers of the expedition being few, this arrangement was made, both with the view to self-defence, and to

keep the officers united; the general intending to transfer them to other corps, as they acquired a knowledge of the Spanish language, in which the chaplain of the division commenced instructing them. In fact, all the measures of the general clearly proved that he perfectly knew how to order his little force to the best advantage. The following was the organization of the corps:—

Guard of Honour—Colonel Young.
Artillery—Colonel Myers.
Cavalry—Colonel the Count de Ruuth.
First Regiment of the Line—Major Sardá.
Engineer
Commissariat } Departments.
Medical
Blacksmiths, *Carpenters*, *Printers*, *and Tailors*.

The infant army was daily exercised, and the greatest good order prevailed.

The general had frequent interviews with commodore Aury, and was very desirous of establishing a cordial understanding with him. Unfortunately, this was not effected; and thereby Mina lost an important accession to his force, as the commodore had actually raised a body of two hundred troops, for the purpose of invading the province of Texas.

Aury held a commission in the service of the Mexican republic, as governor of the province of Texas, and general in the Mexican republican army. This commission had been granted him by *Don José Manuel de Herrera*, who resided in New Orleans, as ambassador to the United States from the Mexican republic. Herrera had been appointed by the Mexican congress, at the period when the revolution was in its most flourishing state; when general Morelos, the distinguished patriot chief, had taken Acapulco, subdued the province of Oaxaca, and established his authority over a considerable part of the Mexican empire. The right, therefore, of Herrera, to appoint Aury an officer in the Mexican republic, cannot be questioned.

Herrera was a priest, grave in his manners; but he possessed very little knowledge of the world, and consequently was easily imposed on. During his stay at New Orleans, he rendered no effectual services to the Mexican cause, except by some trifling shipments of arms and munitions of war, which he sent to general Victoria.

Previous to general Mina's sailing from Baltimore, a fast sailing schooner had been despatched for the Mexican coast, to ascertain the situation of affairs, and to open a communication with general Victoria, who, it was understood, had a considerable patriot force under his orders, in the province of Vera Cruz, and held a small fort on the coast, at a place called *Boquilla de Piedras*. This mission was entrusted to doctor Mier, a native of the internal provinces, and in whom the general placed great confidence.

The doctor, however, was alarmed at the stormy weather he experienced in the gulf, and put into New Orleans: from thence he despatched the schooner for Boquilla. On her arrival there, the captain found that the post was in the hands of the royalists, and he repaired to Galvezton. Information was afterwards received, that Victoria had taken a port to the northward of Boquilla, called Nautla. The schooner was despatched for the latter place, with letters from Mina for Victoria; but, in the meantime, the place had been retaken, and on her arrival the captain found the Spanish flag flying.

Mina deeply regretted that he could not open a communication with Victoria, because he was perfectly aware of his merits, and he felt the importance of acting in concert with him. If Mina could have formed a junction with Victoria, and safely landed the arms and munitions of war which he had then at his command, it would have opened a new era in the revolution: he could then have penetrated through the province of Vera Cruz, to Tehuacan, formed a union with the forces of Teran, Osourno, and the other patriot chiefs, and, in all human probability, would have been able to strike a decisive blow against the royalists. The non-execution of this part of Mina's plans, may be assigned as one of the causes of the eventual failure of his undertaking.

Doctor Mier, hearing of the general's arrival at Galveston, left New Orleans, and repaired to that place. The doctor was a man of most amiable manners, and although he had been educated a priest, he was liberal in his sentiments, a good scholar, and an ardent advocate for the emancipation of his country from the despotism of Spain. He was not, however, calculated to ride in the whirlwind of a revolution, being naturally timid; but, from his general knowledge of New Spain, and his influence in society, the general calculated much on his services, and was sincerely attached to him.

The doctor had been one of the victims of Spanish bigotry, in consequence of having delivered a discourse, in the city of Mexico, in which he undertook to prove that the famous story of the *Virgin of Guadalupe*, was an imposture of the priesthood. For this act of free thinking and speaking, he was shut up for several years in the dungeons of the Inquisition, and was afterwards sent to Rome. There, by his talents and urbanity of manners, he became a favourite with the Pope. Upon the breaking out of the revolution in Spain, he went there, and preached destruction to its invaders; but being a zealous constitutionalist, he was forced to take refuge in England. There he met Mina, and most cordially engaged to accompany him to Mexico. Having mentioned the apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe, and as it is one among the numerous evidences of the superstition which has so long prevailed in Spanish America, it may not be amiss to give some detail of the origin of this apparition. We know, from authentic records, that the superstitious terrors instilled by the Spanish priests into the minds of the ignorant aborigines, were, at the commencement of the conquest, of much more service to the government of Spain than its arms. The images and pictures of saints, which the priests had previously buried, or hidden in places where they might easily be found by the Indians, are at this day to be seen in almost every village and town in the empire. The discovery of those images is ascribed to the interposition of Heaven. Every town has its tutelar saint, upon which are lavished immense sums of money, in dresses, gold and silver ornaments, diamonds, and other precious stones. To all of these,

the Padres have given names, and to each one is attributed miraculous powers, by the credulous Indians, and indeed by many bigoted Creoles. The holy tribunal has most studiously cherished this superstition, and has hurled its thunders against him, who dared to question the sacred origin of these images. It would fill volumes were we to attempt to detail the astonishing circumstances attending these discoveries, and the miraculous virtues ascribed to each saint. They have been transmitted from one generation to another, and have received so many embellishments and confirmations, from the crafty and credulous, (the latter of whom imagine, that the surest way of propitiating the favour, is to magnify the powers, of the saint,) that even some of the priests of better judgment have been led to believe in those wonderful attributes, and are ready to testify to miracles performed by virtue of their prayers and supplications. It is true, that many of the crafty priests are aware of the deception; but, nevertheless, they find it to be their interest to compose books for the express purpose of proving the time and manner, in which those great miracles have been performed; and in so doing, they conceive, that not only their own interests are promoted, but that it is the most effectual mode of preserving the power of the church, and the dignity of the Spanish monarchy. Books, of the kind just mentioned, form almost the only species of literature that is allowed to circulate through the empire. They are sought after with avidity by the unfortunate Creole, and make an impression on his mind not easily eradicated.

About ten years after what the Spaniards call the conquest, the celebrated apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe made its appearance, in the following manner. Adjacent to the city of Mexico is a barren hill. An Indian, acccidentally passing near it, heard sounds of music, and at the same time saw an aërial figure. Alarmed at the vision, he fled. But, passing near the same place shortly afterwards, the same strange occurrence again took place. He was called by name, and told to repair to that spot at a certain time, and he would find her picture buried under a heap of roses. He did so, and found it as was said. The Indian carried this mysterious picture to

the bishop of Mexico, who was, of course, in the secret. A solemn conclave of the clergy took place, and the bishop, kneeling before the picture with the most profound veneration, named it *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe.* A sanctuary was erected for her reception, and she received the exalted title of patroness of Mexico; which she enjoys to the present time. This is the origin of the Virgin of Guadalupe, conformably to the records of the church now existing in Mexico. The original picture is still exhibited in the Virgin's church; it is painted upon a cloth of linen manufacture, called *Uangochi*, composed of coarse threads spun from the fibres of the Maguey *(Agave Americana)* and wove very wide apart. The Indians and Creoles say the picture is miraculous, because, as it is approached, the painting becomes less visible, and when quite close, all traces of the picture disappear; their blind superstition not permitting them to discover, that the open texture of the material, upon which it is painted, is the cause of this disappearance. A priest told the writer another circumstance respecting the Virgin's picture, which he deemed the most important part of the miracle; it is, that the picture was found under a heap of roses, in the winter season, and on a spot where those flowers had never bloomed. It did not occur to the mind of the priest, that at the distance of a few leagues, the climate was quite different, where roses grow throughout the year, and that, consequently, the painters of the picture of the Virgin did not require any celestial aid to procure a heap of roses. In such veneration do the lower orders of Creoles, and indeed many of the middling and higher classes, and the Indians, hold their patroness, that they keep paintings of her in all their houses, invoke her in all their prayers, and implore her assistance in all their difficulties.

In the religious processions which take place in the Mexican empire, almost daily, for the purpose of celebrating some rites of the church, or to offer homage to some of the tutelar saints, there is a solemnity and magnificence displayed, admirably calculated to captivate the vulgar, to gratify the vanity, and impose on the credulity of all classes of the community. The simplicity and purity of the Christian religion

is lost in these pompous and mystical exhibitions. The poor converted Indian, as he is called, knows nothing of the Catholic religion beyond its ceremonies. To the images of saints, and other external symbols, he offers his daily homage, but he is as utterly uninformed of the precepts of the Christian doctrine, as any of the Pagans of former ages.

In order to accommodate the Catholic religion to the prejudices and consciences of the Indians, the priests, with their usual art, have interwoven many of the Indian customs and symbols with Christian ceremonies. Of this strange mixture of Pagan and Christian rites, there are, to this day, numerous evidences over the whole of the Mexican empire. On various holidays, the Indians of both sexes, dressed in the most fantastic manner, dance to the sound of rude instruments before the church doors, and in front of the altar, exhibiting the most ludicrous figures. During the parade of many religious processions through the streets, we see Indians, decorated in the most grotesque manner, beating drums, dancing, and cracking fireworks. In the churches, we are struck by the glaring paintings and images of martyrs, saints and bishops, surrounded by suns, moons and stars; while the trinkets, precious stones, gold and silver ornaments, and the twinkling of numbers of wax tapers, induce a stranger to believe, that he is in one of the fairy edifices of Aladdin, instead of a temple dedicated to the Christian worship. In a conspicuous situation, in the wall of the cathedral church of the city of Mexico, is placed a huge, mishapen stone, on which are engraved hieroglyphic characters, that had formerly been appropriated to the religious ceremonies of the aborigines. In the painting of the Virgin of Guadalupe, the Mexican patroness is represented in a blue robe embellished with stars, and standing on a crescent supported by cherubim. Even the complexion of the Virgin has been suited to the spirit of the times, in order to prove to the Indians, that her apparition was a mark of the especial favour of Heaven. If, therefore, she had been represented with a fair complexion, the intent might not have been answered; and, for this reason, perhaps, we see her represented with features of a "dusky hue."

To support these pompous ceremonies, or, as it is styled, to sustain the splendour and dignity of the church, the unfortunate Mexican is taught to believe constitutes his primary duty; hence, the greatest part of the fruits of his hard labour are absorbed by the ecclesiastic coffers.

The wealth that has been lavished on some of the religious edifices, will appear incredible to those who have never visited Spanish America. From the numerous instances which every where present themselves in Mexico, we select the following.

About three leagues from the town of *San Miguel el Grande*, in the province of Guanaxuato, stand two chapels, on the summit of a high mountain; one, for ordinary divine offices; the other, to exhibit the different scenes, in the sufferings of our Redeemer, previous to, and on his arrival at Mount Calvary. In this chapel was a magnificent altar, on which were the images of our Saviour, the Virgin Mary, and other saints, made of solid silver, ornamented with emeralds and other precious stones. On entering this chapel, on the left-hand, the stranger is astonished on beholding a range of *thirty-two altars*, on each of which are figures, the size of life, representing the different passages in our Saviour's ordeal, and at the end, Mount Calvary, with the body on the cross, accompanied by Mary, John, and others, as mentioned in Holy Writ. All these altars, figures, crosses, &c. are of pure silver. This temple is called the sanctuary of our *Lord of Atonilco*, from the name of the place where it is situated. Devotees from all parts of the kingdom go there to confess, and conform to the penance prescribed by the priests; and large sums are annually collected by our Lord of Atonilco, from these devout pilgrims.

The origin of this chapel merits notice from its singularity. Many years ago, a bandit of the name of *Lohra*, was at the head of such a formidable band, that the Spanish government offered him not only a pardon, but an immense salary, with the arbitrary power and title of supreme judge of the accordada, provided he would exterminate the banditti. Lohra accepted the conditions; seized his fellow robbers; and, under various pretexts, hung them up by hundreds on the

trees. In a few months he completely destroyed them. He was immediately invested with the character of supreme judge, and enjoyed with it, a salary of ten thousand dollars a year, until his death. This office was one of the most arbitrary and independent situations in the kingdom. He had the power of life and death, inflicting what punishment he pleased, and levying contributions on all such as were found trafficking in liquors prohibited by the Spanish government.

Lohra no sooner found himself clothed with this extraordinary power, than he began to levy contributions without mercy on all whom he suspected of dealing in contraband liquors; and in case any one resisted his decrees, he was immediately hung. By such means he amassed immense treasures, which he devoted to the building of the sanctuary of our Lord of Atonilco.

His successors continued long to enjoy those high prerogatives, but they became so capricious and cruel, that about the year 1790, the viceroy count Galvez, took on himself the responsibility of putting a check on the tyrannical tribunal of the accordada. A man of the name of Santa Maria was then judge, and had three culprits at the foot of the gallows ready for execution, when count Galvez suddenly presented himself on horseback, and pronounced their pardon in the name of the king. This act was highly grateful to the people of Mexico, and Charles III. approved the conduct of count Galvez, directing that in future, all sentences of the judge of the accordada must be subject to the confirmation of the royal audiencia, of which the viceroy is president.

In having noticed thus briefly the superstitious follies and extravagance, which have been encouraged among the Mexicans, by the Spanish priests, we do not mean to speak lightly of the Catholic religion; it is the abuses which have been sanctioned under its name that we reprobate, and think a proper subject for animadversion; we have no prejudices in favour of any particular denomination of Christians, and we have only deeply to regret, that many other sects as well as the Catholics, have sullied the purity of true religion, by mingling

with it a mass of ceremonies, revolting to common sense, and disgusting to every enlightened mind. We will now resume the thread of our narrative.

The brig returned to Galvezton, from New Orleans, well equipped, and was now put under Mexican colours, as a national vessel of war. She was called "*El Congreso Mexicano.*"

The general received despatches from his agent at New Orleans, containing overtures from certain persons, who wished him to make an attack upon Pensacola, and who offered to furnish him with men, arms, &c. &c. for that purpose. Mina was anxious to examine into the merits of this project, conceiving that if it could be carried into effect, it might promote his ulterior views on Mexico. Accordingly, he embarked in the brig, and proceeded to New Orleans, leaving colonel Don Mariano Montilla, an officer who had distinguished himself in the Venezuelan revolution, in the command of the division at Galvezton.

Previous to the departure of the general, a very extraordinary circumstance was brought to light, which proved that the Spanish government had resorted to a treacherous plan, to get rid of Mina. The instrument of this diabolical scheme was a young Spaniard, named *Correa.* This youth was under deep obligations to the general. He was the son of Don Diego Correa, who then resided at London, and who had been a conspicuous victim to the despotism of Ferdinand. Young Correa arrived at London, from the continent, totally destitute of the means of subsistence; and, on expressing a wish to the friends of Mina, to follow that officer, he was by them fitted out in a handsome style, his passage and expenses to the United States were paid, and a letter of credit was furnished him on New York. He arrived at that city, and then proceeded to Baltimore to meet the general, who received him with that generous sympathy which he invariably manifested towards the sufferers from Ferdinand's tyranny. Chevalier Don Luis de Onis, minister plenipotentiary of his Catholic majesty, in the United States, soon ascertained that Correa enjoyed the high regard and confidence of Mina; of course, it was of great importance for the minister to gain Correa over to the inter-

ests of Spain. It is not necessary to enter into a minute detail of the artifices, used by the chevalier, to seduce this youth, but the following plain statement of facts will show, that Correa deliberately formed a plan *to assassinate his friend and benefactor Mina.* In what manner the chevalier Onis is implicated, in such an infernal sheme, we know not from any positive data, but we have strong grounds to suspect, that he not only was acquainted with, but promoted the bloody designs of Correa. We have been promised some authentic documents on this subject; and should they reach our hands, we shall not hesitate in giving them publicity.

Correa, in pursuance of his project, arrived with the expedition at Galvezton: after being there a short time, he made an attempt to excite a mutiny among Aury's troops, with an intention, no doubt, to seize the first favourable occasion that might offer, to perpetrate the savage act.

The fellow had the address to seduce some of Aury's officers, as well as two of Mina's, and to influence them so as to promote the mutiny, but he did not, except to one individual, communicate his real intention. Fortunately, one of Aury's officers disclosed the plot of the mutiny to the commodore, by whom the conspirators were immediately arrested. A court of inquiry was held on Mina's officers, but the general, not conceiving it politic to punish them with the severity they deserved, merely gave them a severe reprimand, and set them at liberty.

Correa, finding his plan defeated, despaired of another opportunity to create an insurrection among the troops, and observing that Mina's officers looked on him with contempt, found his situation unpleasant at Galvezton. As he was too much attached to his own existence, to act the part of a daring assassin, he became anxious to abandon the expedition, and gladly embraced the opportunity of retiring from the island, conformably to an order he received from the general, to proceed to New Orleans.

Scarcely had Correa left the island, when Mina received some letters from the United States, which developed the

whole scheme of villany; but they unfortunately arrived too late to aid justice in her vengeance.

By these letters it appeared, that Correa was to receive twelve thousand dollars, and the promise of a matrimonial connexion in Onis's family, provided Mina was put to death. If the chevalier really made such promises to Correa, he no doubt had in view the interests of his beloved master Ferdinand, and probably was guided by the chivalrous example which had been exhibited in Europe, by the renowned Cossack general *Platoff*, who offered his daughter in marriage to the wretch who would assassinate the emperor Napoleon.

The substance of the letters, before mentioned, were published in an order of the day, at the camp at Galvezton, and caused a universal burst of indignation among all the officers and soldiers in the division.

After Correa arrived at New Orleans, he found his situation unsafe, as some of Mina's officers, who were there at the time, had resolved to inflict on him exemplary punishment, which he escaped by flying to Pensacola.

The traitor afterwards reached Havana, where the captain general of Cuba, by way of premium for his services to the Spanish government, gave him a situation in the revenue department. The last accounts state this wretch to be a *custom house officer at Trinidad de Cuba.* We presume, however, that when the officers of the Spanish government become acquainted with the facts previously stated, he will be treated by them with that scorn and abhorrence, which a traitor and coward deserves.

We would fain hope, for the honour of human nature, as well as for the dignity of the diplomatic character, that the suspicions excited against chevalier Onis, in this affair, may eventually turn out to be unfounded, and that the assassin Correa was not stimulated by such high authority, to murder his patron; but the page of history, more especially of the events of the last thirty years, shows that diplomatists have, on several occasions, countenanced deeds that would dishonour banditti, and have boldly asserted the doctrine, that "*the end justifies the means.*"

The ministers of Spain, resident in foreign countries, have long been in the habit of accomplishing their views, by the most refined intrigue, and certainly have not been very delicate as to the means they have employed. Arrogant menaces and secret promises, they have considered as component points in diplomacy. It may not be amiss, although a digression from our narrative, to insert here two letters, written some years ago, on the subject of Miranda's expedition, because they will illustrate the spirit and policy which the Spanish cabinet has invariably pursued, better than a hundred ordinary anecdotes.

In the year 1806, Miranda conducted an expedition against the province of Caracas, which failed. Several foreigners, who were engaged in it, fell into the hands of the Spanish government, among whom were some young Americans, belonging to distinguished families.

The marquis de Casa Yrujo, then ambassador of Spain in the United States, received from the government of Caracas, a list of the names of those unfortunate prisoners, and immediately addressed to a friend of colonel Smith, of New York, the following insidious letter.

"*Philadelphia, June 28th*, 1806.

"Sir,

"I have just received from Caracas, a list of the names of the Americans taken by the Spaniards, on board of Miranda's schooners. The name of *Smith* is twice found in it. I suspect the last to be the *son* of *colonel Smith*, and *grandson* of *Mr. Adams*. Although I had some political difference with him when he was president, this circumstance has not deprived me of that particular regard and respect towards such a distinguished character, and particular consideration for his family. Not the least doubt exists, but the greater part of the prisoners will be put to death as pirates, and I should be very happy to be able, by a timely and immediate interference, to save the life of the unfortunate youth, grandson to the venerable Mr. Adams and his worthy spouse. But to render my intercession effectual, I would require, as the *only condition*,

that colonel Smith would disclose to me, through you, on his word of honour, *all the knowledge he has of Miranda's plans; of his intended points of attack; of the persons with whom he had connexions at Caracas; and the names of the Spaniards in this country, who shared in his scheme and expedition;* in fact, all the *material information* he may be possessed of, and the knowledge of which may be useful to my government, and the preservation and tranquillity of the provinces Miranda had in view to revolutionize.

"As I remember your attachment for Mr. Adams, I take the liberty to make these suggestions to you, who, no doubt, will employ all the means to relieve from affliction a worthy and disconsolate family; at all events, I expect from you a prompt and decisive answer on this head. I remain, sir, with particular regard and consideration,

"Your obedient servant,

Signed, "MARQUIS DE CASA YRUJO.

"To Mr. —— ——."

The preceding letter was handed to colonel Smith, who returned the following dignified and Roman-like answer:—

"*New York, June 30th*, 1806.

"Dear Sir,

"Accept my warmest acknowledgments for your very interesting communication of this date, presented by your son, accompanied by a letter from the marquis de Casa Yrujo, which, after maturely considering, I return, agreeably to your request. I am sure I shall do justice to Mr. and Mrs. Adams, if in their name I thank the marquis for his very polite attention, in a case no doubt near, interesting, and affecting! I am sure, when I do him the justice to communicate his tender solicitude for their grandson, it will not fail to excite those sensibilities and acknowledgments, which the marquis is highly entitled to. For myself, not having the honour of his acquaintance, I have no right to expect other attention, or dignity of character, than what would naturally spring from his own mind, when making such an interesting communication.

"He informs me he has just received from Caracas a list of the names of the Americans taken by the Spaniards, on board of Miranda's schooners; that the name of Smith is twice found in it; and he suspects the last to be my son, and grandson to Mr. Adams; and says, that he should be very happy, by a timely and immediate interference, to save the life of the unfortunate youth, grandson to the venerable Mr. Adams and his worthy spouse; he having no doubt but the greatest part of the Americans will be put to death; but to render this intercession effectual, he requires, as the *only condition*, that I declare to him, through you, on my *word of honour*, all the knowledge I have of Miranda's plans, of the points of attack, of the persons with whom he has connexions in the Caracas, and the names of the Spaniards in this country, who shared in his schemes and expedition; in fact, all the material information I may be possessed of, the knowledge of which may be useful to the Spanish government, for the promotion and preservation of tranquillity, in the provinces Miranda had in view to revolutionize.

"When the marquis takes a dispassionate view of the circumstances connected with general Miranda's visit to Washington, his subsequent visit here, and clearly ascertains that the persons accompanying him in the Leander were not informed of his projects and plans, he will permit his benevolence to expand, and shelter all those taken in the schooners, from harsh treatment and unmerited punishment, and will induce the government of his own country to view the question in other lights, than those which may tend to expose it to more serious animadversions than have been hitherto made, or to rousing the spirit of indignation and resentment, which, if once permitted to burst forth, cannot fail of being attended by strong marks of resentment.

"With regard to my son, he was not made acquainted with the plans of Miranda; he went with him as a young companion, to share his fortune and his fate; he was accompanied by some of his friends, capable of deeds of hardihood and valour, worthy their leader—worthy their cause!

"Whatever may be the situation and fate of the prisoners on board of the schooners, I can never tacitly sanction the lash of tyranny on his associates, and snatch my son from a participation in their fate, whatever it may be. Nothing but the marquis's want of acquaintance with me, can plead an excuse for the indelicacy of the proposition.

"Do me the favour, my friend, to inform the marquis, that were I in my son's situation, I would not comply with his proposals to save myself, and would not cast so great an indignity on my son, my family, and myself, as to shelter him under the shield of disgrace.

"I have no doubt the marquis will give such advice to the government of Caracas, and make such statement to his king, (by whom I may have the honour to be personally recollected,) as will induce them not to tarnish the dignified character of the Spanish nation, by an act of passion and barbarity, connected with the present case.

"I am, dear sir, with respect,

"Your friend and humble servant,

Signed, "WILLIAM S. SMITH.

"To —— ——."

Fortunately, the son of colonel Smith was not among the hapless prisoners at that time in Caracas; but there is little doubt, that had he been there, he would have been sacrificed among the victims of Spanish cruelty who were executed at Puerto Cavello. He is now a resident of the city of Washington.

After the departure of Mina for New Orleans, as already mentioned, a serious difference arose between commodore Aury and colonel Perry, who commanded a body of one hundred Americans, in Aury's service. When Mina first landed, Perry determined, with his men, to quit the service of Aury, and join the standard of Mina. This intention was soon discovered by the commodore, who tried various means to dispossess Perry of his command; he at length, on the 1st of March, arrested him and captain Gordon, making prisoners of

them in his own quarters. This act produced an open rupture. Perry's men, on being informed that their colonel was thus arrested, sent word to the commodore, that they were determined to defend him to the last, and for that purpose beat to arms. To oppose this party, Aury drew up the men whom he thought were in his interest, about eighty in number, principally coloured men, under the command of colonel Savary, with one field piece. During this disgraceful scene in Aury's camp, Mina's division was not inactive. Colonel Montilla placed sentries so as to cut off the communication between the encampments; a supply of ammunition was delivered, and the division was kept under arms. This altercation, however, fortunately terminated without blood-shed. Perry was liberated; he and his men were allowed by the commodore to join the standard they preferred, as well as such others of the commodore's troops as might deem proper to do so. Colonel Perry accordingly placed himself under the orders of Mina.

While the general was at New Orleans, he had frequent interviews with the gentlemen who had proposed the project of an expedition against Pensacola. But he soon discovered that it was merely a mercantile speculation, from which no advantage would result in favour of his views on Mexico; indeed, all the propositions made to him, while at New Orleans, were widely different from his own plans. As a soldier and a patriot he disliked to war for mercenary considerations, and he was most decidedly hostile to all predatory projects. He purchased at New Orleans a ship, the Cleopatra, for a transport, to replace the ship with which he left England, having given her up according to agreement. Having likewise made arrangements for the purchase of another ship, the Neptune, he set sail for Galvezton, taking with him a few European and American officers. Upon his arrival, on the 16th of March, he found the division embarked, and ready for sailing.

In consequence of not having received any definite information of a place at which he could unite with any part of Victoria's forces, and as the whole line of coast was in possession of the royalists, he resolved to proceed to a town

called *Soto la Marina*, on the river Santander, in the colony of that name. This was a point at which the descent was least expected by the royalists. The enemy conjectured that the general meditated effecting a landing in the northern parts of the province of Vera Cruz, for the purpose of forming a junction with Victoria. They had therefore concentrated a body of troops in the vicinity of Tuspan, a central situation, from whence they could quickly march to the invaded point, and crush Mina at the outset.

During the time the division was at Galvezton, some of the officers had resigned, and received passports to leave the island. Colonel Montilla, and two other officers of Caracas, also embarked for New Orleans.

While the fleet was waiting a wind, two brigs, the one a prize to a Mexican privateer, the other to a Buenos Ayres cruizer, loaded with jerked beef and rice, were brought in for condemnation. As there was not leisure to attend to their business, it was determined that they should proceed with the expedition. The division was distributed among the vessels; and, the wind coming out from the northward, the fleet, on the 27th of March, made sail. It consisted of the following vessels:—

An armed schooner, Commodore Aury, having on board the company of artillery, and the cavalry, under colonel the count De Ruuth.

Cleopatra, (transport) Captain Hooper, the general and staff, Guard of Honour, and first regiment of the line.

Two prize brigs, Regiment of the Union, colonel Perry.

Neptune, (storeship) Captain Wisset, commissariat and stores.

Schooner Ellen Tooker, on a trading voyage: she arrived as the fleet was getting under way, and agreed to accompany the expedition.

A small sloop, Captain Williams.

The force of the division, on board the fleet, including all those in any manner attached to it, the sailors, mechanics, and servants, was three hundred.

Soon after sailing, it came on to blow heavy from the westward, which threatened a long run; and it was also discovered that the Cleopatra had not the necessary provisions on board. The general had confided in the reports made by the then commissary, Bianchi, and the captain of the ship, and presumed, that, agreeably thereto, stores were shipped. Supplies were, however, obtained from the cargo of the prize brig: but, on the arrival of the fleet off the Rio Grande del Norte, the water was nearly expended. As the weather had moderated, the general resolved to endeavour to procure supplies there, and the fleet ran in and anchored off the mouth of the river. A sergeant's guard had been stationed there by the royalists, for the purpose, as was understood, of preventing privateers from watering. Major Sardá and some other officers, who volunteered, were sent on shore to ascertain if supplies could be procured. As the fleet had hoisted Spanish colours, and as major Sardá, the commander of the party was a Spaniard, the guard supposed the fleet to be Spanish, bound to Vera Cruz. The boats had free access to the river to obtain water, and the soldiers of the guard drove up some cattle, which were wild, and in great abundance. The bar of the Rio Grande is very shoal, and it was with great difficulty that a small supply of water could be got off, owing to the danger of the bar. A boat belonging to commodore Aury's schooner was upset among the breakers, and a Spanish officer, lieutenant Dallares, was unfortunately lost. This young Spaniard, to whom Mina had been a benefactor, and who had left England with him, was one of the few of his countrymen, that had adhered to the general to the last. Mina was much attached to him, and deeply regretted the accident which had deprived him of a warm friend. Four men also, belonging to the fleet, deserted and hid themselves in the woods; they afterwards presented themselves to the enemy, to whom they gave every information.

As soon as the vessels had obtained a sufficient supply of fresh beef and water, to carry the expedition to the intended point, the fleet made sail, with the wind at south east, but it soon afterwards shifted to the westward, and blew a gale, in which the vessels were dispersed. The troops on board the Cleopatra, whose stores were less ample than those of the other vessels, were thereby placed in a disagreeable situation. The fresh beef would not last more than twenty-four hours, and the prize brig, which had hitherto supplied their wants, was not in sight. The stores were soon reduced to a small quantity of bread, and a keg of almonds, and as the weather continued bad, it became absolutely necessary to put every one on short allowance. Accordingly, half a biscuit, and a few almonds, with a pint of water, were daily served out to each man, the general receiving the same; but this privation continued only five or six days. The Cleopatra arrived at the rendezvous the 11th of April; and the next and following day the rest of the fleet got in also.

Arrangements were then made to disembark the troops, and, early on the 15th, it was effected without accident.

Two men, dressed and mounted as peasantry (paisanos) joined the general in the course of the day. They afforded him some local information, and he understood from them that Don *Felipe La Garza*, the commandant of the district, was in the adjacent town of *Soto la Marina*, with a small force. These men appeared frank and well disposed, and offered their services as guides, and accompanied a party to drive up some horses. They, however, watched an opportunity, and slipped off. It afterwards appeared, that these men were Creoles, of that part of the country, and royalist soldiers, who had been sent down by La Garza to ascertain the strength of the invading force, which having done, to the best of their abilities, they decamped. The general had brought with him from New Orleans a native of Soto la Marina, so that he suffered no great inconvenience for the want of a guide, by the desertion of his new friends.

During the passage from Galvezton, Mina published an address to his companions in arms, in which he reminded them

of the sacred enterprise in which they had engaged, to constantly bear in mind that they were not going to conquer the country, but to aid in its emancipation from a tyrannical government; he particularly recommended to them, to be careful in conciliating the good will of the inhabitants, to respect their customs, to show the most scrupulous regard to the ministers of religion, and on no occasion, or under any pretence, to violate the sanctity of the temples dedicated to divine worship.

CHAPTER IV.

Soto la Marina occupied by Mina—General arrangements there—Action of colonel Perry with Don Felipe La Garza—Continuation of events in Soto la Marina—Capture of the Cleopatra, by the Spanish frigate La Sabina—Dastardly conduct of the officers of that expedition—Line of march taken up for the interior—A succession of events—Action at, and capture of, the town of El Valle de Mais—Occurrences at that place, and departure therefrom—Battle of Peotillos—Sanguinary decrees of the enemy—Conduct of the priest of Hideonda, and remarks thereon—Mina's progress—Attack and taking of Sierra de Pinos—Departure therefrom—Junction with the Patriots—Arrival at the Patriot fortress of Sombrero—Its description.

THE mouth of the river Santander is very narrow, with a bar across it, over which vessels drawing more than six feet of water cannot be carried. Near the beach the country is intersected by large bayous, and shallow ponds, extending a long way to the northward. After passing the bar, the river suddenly widens, but afterwards gradually contracts itself towards the town of Soto la Marina. It is navigable, for such vessels as can pass the bar, to within a very short distance of the town, beyond which it is too shallow even for boats. The village (pueblo) of Soto la Marina stands upon an elevated situation, on the left or north bank of the river, and is distant from its mouth eighteen leagues.

On the morning of the 15th, the boats of the fleet were despatched up the river, with a field piece, some stores, and a detachment of artillery, to meet the division at the old settlement of Soto la Marina, which is but a short distance up the river, on the road to the present village; for which place the division, at the same time, took up its march. The

boats, not finding the division at the old settlement, as was expected, proceeded on to the town, where they found the troops had just arrived before them. The division had been three days on the march from the beach, owing to the ignorance of the guide, who had conducted it by a very circuitous route; and it had suffered much, from extreme heat and want of water.

In Mexico, five months of the year, commencing with May, are rainy; the other seven are perfectly dry. The expedition had landed at a period of the most parching heat and drought, when every rivulet was dried up; so that a march in the middle of the day, was almost insupportable. The least fatiguing method of conducting a march in Mexico, particularly in the low regions of its coasts, and the internal provinces, is, to move forward at the first dawn of day, and advance until nine or ten o'clock; then to halt, and employ the interval in cooking, and refreshing the troops, until four in the afternoon, when the march should be resumed, and a halt made for the night where the local positions best point out. Thus, more ground can be gone over, and with less fatigue to the soldier, than by continuing the march through the middle of the day.

The advanced guard, composed of volunteers from the Guard of Honour, and the cavalry, with a detachment of the first regiment of the line, under major Sardá, entered Soto la Marina, without any opposition; La Garza, with the garrison and some families, evacuating the town on its approach. The division was met, at the entrance of the village, by the curate, who welcomed the general with open arms. When La Garza announced to the inhabitants the landing of Mina, he represented him as accompanied by a band of heretics, who had come into the country to deal out destruction on every side, and indiscriminately to put all to the sword. By these misrepresentations, and by coercive measures, he had compelled the most respectable part of the community to abandon the town; and it was with much astonishment and satisfaction, that the remaining inhabitants found themselves treated with respect.

On taking possession, the necessary proclamations were issued, offering protection to the persons and property of those

who remained peaceably at their homes, recalling the inhabitants who had deserted the place, and threatening the confiscation of the property of those who did not return within a given time. Civil officers also were selected from among the inhabitants, and clothed with authority by the general. Colonel the count De Ruuth, at this period, resigned his command, and returned on board of the commodore's vessel. The colonel was highly esteemed by the whole division; and his loss was much regretted. Captain Maylefer was promoted to the rank of major, and appointed to the command of the cavalry.

A printing-press was immediately established, under the direction of Doctor Infanté, a native of Havana; and the general's manifesto was published. It took a retrospect of his exertions in the cause of liberty, and set forth the motives which had induced him to espouse that of the suffering colonies. This document soon reached the military commandants, many of whom, with their troops, would have joined the standard of Mina; but, as they had ascertained the strength of his division, they held back, conceiving his force too inconsiderable to effect any important object. Nevertheless, many of the inhabitants were not overawed by the royalists; and, in the first instance, countrymen, to the number of upwards of one hundred, united under his banners: they were well-formed, hardy fellows, and subsequently proved themselves faithful and brave. The division, at different periods, was joined by other recruits, the whole number amounting to above two hundred. Among those who joined it were two royalist officers, lieutenant-colonel Don Valentine Rubio, and his brother, lieutenant Rubio.

The attention of the general was constantly directed towards the equipment and regulation of his little band. By colonel Rubio, as well as from other sources, he was furnished with horses; and a hundred of the recruits were attached to the cavalry, the others to the first regiment. They who afterwards joined the division, were enrolled either with the hussars, the dragoons, or the first regiment. The different corps were equipped as follows:—

Guard of Honour, (infantry) officers, uniformed as such, armed with musket and bayonet.

Artillery, Brown coats, faced with red; four field pieces, two six inch howitzers, and two eleven and a half inch mortars.

Cavalry, *Hussars*, Scarlet hussar jackets, chacot and plume, armed with swords, light dragoon carabines, and pistols.

———, *Dragoons*, United States dragoon uniform, armed with sword, pistol, and lance.

Regiment of the Union, Uniform of the British 104th regiment of infantry.

First regiment of the line, United States rifle uniforms.

Mina, in furtherance of his plans, scoured the country in every direction; but, although these incursions were made by small parties, sometimes not exceeding twenty, yet La Garza, who was hovering in the vicinity of Soto La Marina, with upwards of three hundred men, never attacked them. The general visited some of the towns and haciendas, (plantations) and a detachment penetrated even to *Santander*, the capital of the province: but La Garza's threats obliged the respectable inhabitants to retire from their settlements, on the approach of Mina's parties, and, however ill inclined they might be to such removal, they were forced to comply with seeming alacrity.

During this period, a valuable prize was unluckily snatched from the grasp of the general. He received intelligence that Don Ramon de La Mora, owner of the hacienda of *Palo Alto*, seven leagues distant from Soto la Marina, who had been for some time amusing him with promises of supplies, had suddenly decamped, taking with him all his moveables, with his cash, amounting, as was said, to one hundred thousand dollars; and that he was encamped in a *rancho*,* eleven leagues distant

* *Rancho* signifies a farm, or collection of peasant huts from one and upwards. These places have no churches, depending for spiritual assistance on the curate of an adjoining pueblo or hacienda. A church is necessary to constitute a pueblo; but a collection of houses, be their number great or small, if there be not a church, is called a rancho. Some of them are very extensive, while others contain only a single house. Some of the pueblos contain merely the church and the curate's house, while others have a dense population.

from the town. The general, with twenty dragoons, and eighty infantry, under colonel Perry, marched, on the same night, to surprise him. While on their way, the general was informed that de La Mora was escorted by a body of troops. Arrived within two leagues, Mina ordered colonel Perry to continue his march to the rancho, while he, with the cavalry, took another road, that they might attack the enemy in front and rear. Having arrived near the rancho, and expecting to find the enemy unprepared, the general charged into the place; but, to his great surprise, he found neither the enemy nor his own infantry: the houses also were abandoned, but the lights which were burning evidently denoted that their inmates had recently fled. Unable to gain any intelligence, either of his infantry, or of the object of his march, he was obliged to return to Soto la Marina, highly mortified at the disappointment. Perry, after separating from the cavalry, arrived at the rancho, where he learned that Don Ramon had proceeded onward; and, leaving information with the inhabitants for the general, he marched in pursuit of him. But, as soon as Perry had left the place, the people retired to the woods. Unexpectedly, in the morning, colonel Perry came upon the object of his pursuit, encamped in a plain; and the property was captured. But it had not been long in his possession, when La Garza, with three hundred and fifty men, who had been escorting the property, made their appearance. The colonel, finding himself opposed by such a superiority of force, and being unacquainted with the character of his enemy, deemed it prudent to occupy an advantageous position, there to act on the defensive, leaving a guard of six men with the property. La Garza advanced singly, and held a parley with an officer of colonel Perry; during which, he offered the royal clemency to the troops, if they would lay down their arms. This proposition put an end to the conference: La Garza returned to his troops, and prepared for the attack. In the meantime, Perry, who, whatever faults may be ascribed to him, was an heroic American, addressed his men in a short but enthusiastic harangue; reminding them, that the eyes of their country were fixed on their conduct, and that an oppor-

tunity now presented itself to prove that they were worthy of the cause they had espoused. At that moment, the enemy's cavalry charged, with its accustomed impetuosity: they were repulsed. They returned to the charge, and made several unsuccessful attempts to break Perry's infantry; but, finding all their endeavours fruitless, they at length retired in confusion, leaving nine dead. As the colonel had no cavalry with which to follow up his success, the enemy again formed, but manifested no disposition to renew the attack. Perry, after having gained this advantage, was reluctantly obliged to abandon the object of his expedition, being unable, from the want of cavalry, to withdraw the property. He fell back, unmolested, on Soto la Marina. In this affair, he lost one man killed, and two taken prisoners; they belonged to the guard placed over the property: but, in the ranks, no one was either killed or wounded. This advantage, although trivial as regards the injury done the enemy, had great weight with Mina's division. It inspired confidence, and induced a belief in his little band, that they were able to contend against far superior numbers.

After Mina's disembarkation, a force of upwards of eight hundred royalists was stationed at Altamira, forty leagues south of Soto la Marina. The passive conduct of the enemy, in allowing Mina to remain so long unmolested, is a circumstance which can best be explained by the royal commanders. But the dispersed condition of the enemy's troops, who were scattered in small parties over the country, and the invasion of the kingdom at Soto la Marina being entirely unexpected, are, it is probable, the reasons why Don Joaquin Arredondo, the commandant general of the eastern internal provinces, was so long in making preparations, and in moving from Monterey, his head-quarters.

The situation of that division of the kingdom, and indeed of the whole of Mexico, was at this time very critical. The great body of the troops were disaffected to the royal cause; Mina was adored by the European soldiers; and he had indubitable intelligence, that a large number of natives were ready to come down from the mountains to the sea-coast to join him;

who were only prevented from doing it, by the subsequent movement of the enemy. Had Mina landed with only five hundred troops, he might, with a sure confidence of success, have awaited the enemy in his intrenchments at Soto la Marina; and there can scarcely exist a doubt, that in that case a blow would have been struck against Arredondo, from which he could not have easily recovered. The intimate knowledge which we have acquired, since that period, respecting the royal troops; their known disaffection; the intrepidity, and superior appointment, of Mina's little band, and the distinguished ability, activity, and bravery of their commander, all combine to warrant this assertion.

The general, by advices and spies, received intelligence, at the commencement of the month of May, that Arredondo was concentrating all the disposable force of the *comandancia*. Knowing that the enemy would be too strong for his small force, he proposed to throw up a small work of defence at Soto la Marina, for the purpose of protecting the military stores, and holding out against a siege, should the royalists attempt to invest it; while, in the interim, he should, by rapid marches, penetrate into the interior, and form a junction with the patriots in that quarter; an enterprise which he conceived to be practicable, and from which he flattered himself he should be able to return with an augmented force, sufficient to defeat the enemy, and also to bring with him pecuniary supplies. In pursuance of these determinations, an eligible situation was selected, on the bank of the river, a little to the eastward of the village; and the construction of the fort was commenced, under the direction of captain Rigal, of the engineers. The whole division laboured with alacrity, in the accomplishment of this work, in which they were assisted by the country people, the general himself setting the example, by sharing the labour with them. The little fortification was soon in a state of considerable forwardness; and, although it was only a mud fort, yet it was hoped, that, when completed, it would be sufficient to bid defiance to the efforts of the enemy. As the river was here very narrow, it was intended to throw up a redoubt on the opposite bank, which should protect the rear of the fort, and cover the water.

Mina's conduct, on this occasion, was marked with the greatest firmness and intrepidity. Aware that Arredondo would put in motion an overwhelming force of two thousand men at least, he resolved to leave a garrison in the mud fort, and to cut his way, with the residue of his little band, into the interior of the Mexican empire. These dispositions appear stamped with temerity, or rather bear the features of knight-errantry; but the circumstances of his situation justified the measures that he adopted, and the sequel will show, that untoward circumstances alone prevented the gallant general from succeeding in his object.

During this interval, commodore Aury had departed in his schooner, having made an arrangement with the general for the purchase of his brig of war, the Congreso Mexicano, then in New Orleans.

The prize brigs had also sailed, and there remained at the bar the Cleopatra, Neptune, and Ellen Tooker. The former had come down as a transport, in ballast. The Neptune store ship, being old, and a very heavy sailer, was run on shore at the mouth of the river, as soon as she was discharged, in order to be broken up, as her materials could be applied to various other purposes. Of her cargo, a considerable quantity had been carried up the river, though much, particularly of the powder, still remained at the landing place. The officers and seamen of the ships, in charge of these stores, had pitched some tents on the beach, with the view of sheltering them from the weather; but they little expected that these very tents should have the effect, as was subsequently the case, of exciting alarm among the crews of a Spanish frigate and two schooners, so as to deter them from disembarking for the purpose of destroying the stores.

On the part of the sailors, matters went on very pleasantly till the morning of the 17th of May, when, at seven o'clock, the Spanish frigate *La Sabina*, and the schooners *La Belona* and *La Proserpina*, appeared in the offing, despatched from Vera Cruz with most positive orders (as it afterwards appeared) not only to destroy the vessels, but also the stores that might be found on shore.

At sight of these unwelcome visiters, the crew of the Cleopatra got into the boats, and pushed for the shore. As it was impossible for the seamen to resist so powerful an enemy, all hands abandoned the stores, took to the boats, and came up to Soto la Marina with the intelligence. Captain Hooper, however, remained with his boat a short way up the river, from whence he could distinctly observe the conduct of the Spanish marine.

The Ellen Tooker immediately made sail, and, as the Spaniards say, escaped by superior sailing. The Cleopatra had nothing whatever on board, except a cat, which the sailors, in their hurry, had forgotten to carry with them. The vessel had not the semblance of any thing warlike; she was quite light, had bright sides, and was without quarters. While the schooners were in chase of the Ellen Tooker, the frigate acted with *commendable* caution. She came down with great care upon the unfortunate Cleopatra, and after pouring *two broadsides* into her, finding she made no return, they ventured to board and take possession of her. Encouraged by this dash, they manned the boats of the squadron, (the schooners having returned from the chase,) for the purpose of landing, and either carrying off or destroying the stores on the beach. After pulling near the mouth of the river, these valiant fellows took fright, no doubt at the sight of the tents pitched by the sailors. The appearance of them probably excited an apprehension that a party was in waiting; they, therefore, thought it most prudent to abandon this perilous attempt, and content themselves with the victory achieved over the empty ship. They accordingly returned to their respective vessels, and soon afterwards, having put two guns from the frigate on board the prize, the whole squadron made sail. The ship however was so much shattered by the unmerciful cannonading she had sustained, as to be rendered unseaworthy, and after being in possession of the enemy a short time, they burnt her.

On returning to Vera Cruz, these heroes boasted of their bravery in having destroyed *two* vessels, one a *ship of war*, alluding to the Neptune, which, it will be recollected, had been previously broken up by order of the general; and they alleged

as a reason for not destroying the stores ashore, that the surf ran too high. The true reason we have before conjectured; for the surf certainly was no obstacle. The stores had been safely landed when it had been equally great, and the crew of the ship had that very morning experienced no difficulty from it.

The victory over the rebel Mina, at Soto la Marina, was celebrated at Vera Cruz, on the return of the frigate La Sabina, by a solemn Te Deum. Despatches were transmitted to the city of Mexico, which were afterwards published in the Mexican Gazette, announcing that Mina's expedition was totally destroyed, and a *number* of prisoners taken. In consequence of this signal victory, a general promotion took place; and the midshipman, who fearlessly boarded the Cleopatra, was appointed a lieutenant. We shall have occasion to notice, in the sequel, other exaggerations and palpable falsehoods, which the Spanish government have been in the habit of publishing in the course of this revolution; indeed, how could it be otherwise, when there is only a solitary newspaper in the whole kingdom, and that under the vigilant control of a despotic government?

Mina heard of the arrival of the squadron off the river, and of the capture of the vessels, with the greatest composure. He at once concluded that the enemy would not only destroy the stores, but would co-operate with Arredondo. The general therefore ordered a detachment, with a field piece, down the river to observe the movements of the enemy; but captain Hooper soon after coming up, his account of the affair converted the alarm of the garrison into a scene of merriment, at the expense of their valiant antagonists.

The fort was by this time in a state of completion. Four carronades from the fleet, the field pieces and howitzers, were mounted. Two eleven and a half inch mortars, a considerable quantity of ammunition, and part of the Neptune's cargo, were brought up. Cattle were killed, and their flesh jerked; such corn as could be procured in the vicinity was brought in, and the place was put in as good a state of defence, as the time and circumstances would permit.

As general Arredondo had commenced his march from Monterey, and was advancing upon the garrison with a body of two thousand men, and seventeen pieces of artillery, (being the united force of the eastern internal provinces,) Mina made the necessary dispositions for his intended march into the interior. He encamped the part of the division with which he was to perform the undertaking, on the right bank of the river, about a league distant from Soto la Marina, where it remained a few days.

Colonel Perry had for some time given strong evidences of discontent. He had frequently avowed his opinion, that the division was too weak to be of any service to the patriots, and that he anticipated its annihilation. It was afterwards supposed, that he had long meditated the scheme which he now put into execution. Taking advantage of the absence of the general and colonel Young from the encampment, he harangued his soldiers, and informed them of his intention of separating from Mina, and returning to the United States; he represented to them the very great perils into which they were about to be drawn, and urged them to retreat while an opportunity presented itself. By these means he prevailed on fifty-one of his troops, including major Gordon, and the rest of his officers, with one of the Guard of Honour, to accompany him. They marched in the direction of *Matagorda*, at which place he expected to meet with a sufficient number of boats to convey his party within the line of demarcation, between the United States and the Spanish possessions.

The colonel's conduct caused both surprise and regret; for although he had occasionally manifested some caprice and discontent, yet no one supposed it possible that he could abandon the cause in the hour of danger; and indeed his conduct on this occasion is still very mysterious. Besides, to march with such a handful of men along the sea coast, where he knew that water, particularly at that season of the year, was very scarce, and when the enemy, it was presumable, would oppose his progress, was an act of palpable rashness.

It was subsequently ascertained from the best Mexican authorities, that the colonel did actually penetrate to within a

short distance of his destined point; after several skirmishes with the royal troops, in which success attended him. Flushed with these victories, he determined on attacking a fortified position near Matagorda, which might have been left in his rear, as the garrison did not evince the least disposition to annoy him. He had summoned the commandant to surrender, who was deliberating on the propriety of doing so, at the moment when a party of two hundred cavalry made its appearance. A refusal to the summons was the consequence. The garrison sallied out, and a severe action commenced, in which Perry and his men displayed the most determined valour. They continued combating against this superiority of force till every man was killed, except Perry. Finding himself the only surviver, and determined not to be made a prisoner, he presented a pistol to his head, and terminated his existence. Thus perished a brave but rash man, and with him fell some valuable officers and men.

Colonel Perry had been in the United States' service, and was at the memorable battle of New Orleans. He embarked in the cause of Mexico, and was attached to the division that invaded *Texas*, under Don *José Bernardo Gutierez*. He was under the command of *Toledo*, in the attack made on the Spanish troops commanded by Arredondo, in advance of *San Antonio de Bejar*, on the 18th of August, 1813. In that disastrous affair, the colonel behaved with his usual courage, but narrowly escaped with his life. His sufferings from fatigue and privations were extreme, before he again reached the United States.

The desertion of colonel Perry, with so great a number of valuable men, was a most severe blow to Mina; but it did not daunt his resolute mind. Major Stirling, who had been in the service of the United States, was appointed to the command of the regiment of the Union, and other officers were nominated in lieu of those who had deserted.

Arredondo having, by this time, advanced to within a short distance of Soto la Marina, the general made his final arrangements at the fort; leaving, for its garrison, detachments of the Guard of Honour, artillery, first regiment of the line, engi-

neers, medical and commissariat departments, mechanics, &c. with the sailors of the destroyed vessels, under captain Hooper, and some recruits. The whole, amounting to about one hundred men, were placed under the command of major *Don José Sardá.* The general instructed the major to hold out to the last; assuring him that he would return in a short time, and compel the enemy to raise the siege, should they attempt to form one during his absence.

On the 24th of May, the division commenced its march. It was composed of the following troops:—

General and staff, - - - - - -	11
Guard of Honour, colonel Young, - - -	31
Cavalry, hussars and dragoons, major Maylefer,	124
Regiment of the Union, major Stirling, - -	56
First regiment of the line, captain Traviño, -	64
Artillery soldiers, - - - - -	5
Officers' servants, armed, - - - -	12
Ordinanzas of the staff, - - - -	5
Total, - - - - - - -	308*

When the march was commenced, the enemy was only a few leagues distant; and therefore the utmost secrecy, and rapid movements, became necessary, in order to elude him. The following day, the guide conducted the division through an Indian path, over hills covered with dense woods, which, in many places, it became necessary to re-open. It traversed thickets, which had not, perhaps, for many years previously, been penetrated. This day's march was long, commencing at sun-rise. The troops suffered for want of water; for until

* This was not the actual strength of the division, when it first marched. A change also took place in the corps. Some of the officers of the Guard of Honour, were transfered, on the march, to other corps. During the first twelve days of its progress, several recruits offered themselves; and, as a few stand of arms, and some clothing, were carried along with the division, they were enrolled with the cavalry, or the first regiment. In addition to the above, there were several muleteers. To avoid a prolix detail, the writer has at once stated the greatest strength of the division.

sun-set, when the division emerged from the thickets, it had been exposed to a burning sun, without any breeze or water to refresh them. Some water was found at the edge of the thicket; and, after a few minutes' halt, the march was resumed, and continued till midnight, when the general, with the cavalry, advanced to an hacienda. Mina took with him the guide, and the division was in consequence obliged to halt; but it remained under arms, and at day-light again moved on, arriving, about noon, at the hacienda, fatigued and hungry.

Beef was here served out, but the necessary article of bread, from the method of preparing it,* could not possibly be procured; and the troops were under the necessity of eating meat alone. This was the general fare the road afforded, for the remainder of the march, and that only once in twenty-four hours. Although the whole of the troops were mounted, yet their progress was tedious and slow, as the horses were soon

* The bread stuff consumed by the Mexicans generally, but particularly by the country people, is made of corn, and by a process unknown elsewhere. The quantity of corn, necessary for the daily consumption of the family, is put to steep, over night, in a large earthen vessel, in hot water, mixed with lime. This softens the husk, and in the morning it is ready for use; but the taste of the corn, and the greatest part of its substance, is extracted by this preparation. It is then ground up, with much labour, between two flat stones, called by the Indians *a metate;* and afterwards formed, by beating it between the hands, into cakes, about eight or ten inches in diameter, and about one-sixteenth of an inch in thickness. These are then placed on an earthen heater, or griddle, *(comal)* and baked. These cakes they call *tortillas.* The preparation of them is very laborious, and entirely performed by the women; and, if the family be large, it requires four or five to perform this duty. The art of making tortillas is considered of great importance by the natives; and its excellency consists in grinding the grain till it becomes white, making the cakes thin, and, above all, in keeping the table supplied with a succession of hot ones during the meals. The Indian, when about to marry, is particularly careful to select for his bride one who understands this art; perfection in it being considered by them as the acme of female accomplishments.

From the preceding description, it will be perceived, that to make tortillas, in the small ranchos, for upwards of three hundred soldiers, would have required more time than could have been spared for the purpose; and therefore it rarely happened that the troops were supplied with this important article of food. In the towns and large villages, however, abundance of wheaten bread can always be procured.

broken down by continual and long marches. The sufferings of the troops, from the want of good provisions, the tediousness of the marches through a broiling sun, and the being frequently many hours without water, together with other causes, were almost incredible; but, as it is not the intention of the writer to swell the narrative with a prolix statement of personal hardships, although it was one continuation of privations, he will restrict himself to the mention of such only as he conceives to be essential to the history.

The general, by making the rapid and secret march of the two preceding days, not only eluded the enemy, but calculated on being able to surprise some of the rich refugees from Soto la Marina, who, he learned, were at this hacienda, which was distant from that place, by the route taken by the division, twenty-five leagues. He presumed they would be lulled into security, as they conceived it was impossible for him to advance by the high road, without their receiving timely advice. In fact, the mission was completely surprised; but Mina found there only some priests, and the wife of Don Ramon de La Mora, the proprietor of Palo Alto. A part of the property which had been taken by colonel Perry, was found deposited there; and, as it consisted of articles essential to the comfort and wants of the troops, the general ordered them to be distributed among his men.

From this place, the division moved forward, the next morning. Nothing material occurred, until its arrival at the town of *Horcasitas*, situated on the bank of the river Altamira. The river was fordable, but by a very dangerous pass; and one officer, lieutenant Gabet, was swept away, with his horse, and drowned. About noon, on the following day, the troops reached an hacienda, on the opposite bank of the river, about five leagues down the stream, where a halt was made for the day. From this place, a party was despatched to bring in a herd of seven hundred horses, which had been collected, in the vicinity of this place, for the use of the enemy's troops. The horses were driven in: they were a most important acquisition to Mina, while their loss was severely felt by the enemy. The following afternoon, Mina continued his pro-

gress, having mounted his troops on the best of the horses, the remainder being driven in the rear of the division. But, a few nights afterwards, nearly the whole of these animals were lost, while the division was ascending, in great darkness, a thickly wooded mountain, by a very narrow and bad road. The general was now advancing upon the town of *El Valle de Mais*. Mina's late movements had kept the royalists in a state of continual alarm. The enemy were at a loss to ascertain the point upon which they were directed; and, as both Altamira and Tampico were in their turns threatened, the enemy were obliged to remain in these positions, to protect them. As soon, however, as he advanced from Horcasitas upon El Valle de Mais, a strong body of troops was put in motion to pursue him. To these, the capture of the cavallada (herd of horses) just mentioned, was a sore event.

Just as the division was about to march, on the morning of the 8th of June, a peasant arrived, with the intelligence that the enemy from El Valle de Mais, about four hundred strong, all cavalry, had taken post some distance in advance of the town, and were determined to make a bold stand.

This news raised the spirits of the little band, who continued the march, anxious to come in contact with the enemy. It was soon perceived, from various articles of provisions scattered along the road, that the enemy had changed his resolution, and had retreated: the track of wheels also denoted that he had cannon. It appeared, however, that he again determined to make a stand; for, about noon, the division came upon the enemy, whose force consisted of nearly two hundred cavalry, advantageously posted on an eminence on the high road, three leagues from El Valle de Mais.

The satisfaction manifested by the division, convinced Mina that he could rely on their conduct; and he immediately made dispositions for the attack. The infantry were dismounted; and the best marksmen from the Guard of Honour, and regiment of the Union, were selected to act as light troops. These, fourteen in number, were directed to enter a thicket, on which the enemy's left rested, and to dislodge it; while the main body remained firm, ready to act according to circumstances.

The light troops advanced to the thicket, and after giving a few well-directed fires, by which they killed five and wounded several others, they were astonished to see their antagonists fall back on their reserve. They were pursued by the same party, who again opened a fire on them, and the whole then retreated. The general, as soon as the enemy's troops gave way, ordered the main body to move on; and, when they finally retreated, Mina selected from the cavalry twenty of the best mounted, partly foreigners, and partly natives of Soto la Marina, and boldly pursued the enemy, nearly four hundred strong, all cavalry, through the town, and a short way on the other side of it, when a part of them rallied. The general, at the head of his twenty men, dashed in among them; they broke and fled. Mina pursued them upwards of two leagues, seized one gun, a small mountain piece, and put them entirely to the rout. He then returned, and occupied the town. The enemy lost several men, and some prisoners were taken. Mina had one man severely wounded, but none killed.

The personal intrepidity and skill displayed by the general on this occasion, produced in the minds of the division, not only devotion to him, but the most unbounded confidence in his abilities.

El Valle de Mais is situated near the river *Panuco*, and not far from the town bearing that name, in the province of *San Luis Potosi*. It was by far the best town the division had yet seen. It has a large square, with extensive and well built edifices and some handsome churches. The houses generally have an air of neatness, and are well constructed. The division had almost despaired of seeing a town like this, from the gloomy appearance of the country it had hitherto traversed. The road had lain through the worst part of the *Tierra Caliente*, or hot region, which, from the paucity of inhabitants, the want of culture, and the scarcity of water, had induced many to form a mean opinion of Mexico. But, at the Valle de Mais, a brighter prospect was unfolded. The ascent into the *Tierra Fria*, or cold region, which extends over the vast mountain or table land composing eight-tenths of the Mexican

kingdom, had commenced. The population of the country was becoming more dense, good towns and fine haciendas now met the eye in various directions, and every hour gave a more agreeable climate.

El Valle de Mais is a place of important trade. Its magazines were well stored with dry goods, and many of its inhabitants were extremely wealthy. They had, generally speaking, precipitately decamped, under an impression that Mina's progress would be marked by sanguinary conduct. Their fears also were increased, in consequence of their having just celebrated, with great rejoicings, the victory which the Gazette of Mexico had announced to have been gained by the royal fleet over Mina. Such, however, had been their hurry to escape, that they left to the mercy of their conqueror their valuable and well-furnished stores. Here Mina gave an unequivocal proof of his politic and generous character. The strictest orders were given to the troops not to stain the cause they had espoused, by any act of plunder or personal violence towards the inhabitants. Only a few articles which were necessary for the troops, were taken from the stores; and he received but a moderate sum of money from the town; thus convincing the people, that he did not come to oppress or maltreat them. Some dry goods, captured during the march, were served out, and a few dollars each were given to the troops.

On the evening of the 9th, the general received information that *Armiñan*, commandant of a battalion of the European regiment of infantry of the line of Estremadura, was in pursuit of him from Altamira, with about seven hundred infantry, and a strong body of cavalry, and was then two days' march in the rear. The receipt of this news caused neither surprise nor dismay among the troops. They were so elated by the victory recently gained, that, had the general proposed to march, and meet this formidable force, the troops would cheerfully have obeyed the order. But the general was too prudent to seek combats with such a disparity of numbers. His great object was to form a junction with the patriot forces in

the interior; and although he calculated on his troops behaving well, yet he was aware that every action against superior numbers must reduce his own: it therefore became his invariable policy to avoid, instead of fighting, the enemy. He, however, called a council of his principal officers, to consult whether it was best to await the enemy in the same position, where the attack had been made the preceding day, or, by making forced marches, endeavour to join the patriots, before the enemy could get up. The council determined in favour of the latter movement, and, at dawn of the next morning, the division was on its march.

The marches were now longer than heretofore; the troops obtaining scarcely any rest or refreshment: but they were cheered by Mina's example. He appeared superior to fatigues or privations, and was constantly on the alert.

On the 12th, at night, the division arrived and halted at a rancho. The next morning, a sufficiency of tortillas, with meat, was provided. A small detachment of cavalry was despatched to a neighbouring rancho, but was driven in by a superior number of the enemy's cavalry. It was also understood, that Armiñan was uniting with a considerable body, called the *Rio Verde* cavalry, and was but a few leagues off. Mina thereupon caused the division to move forward; and as it became necessary to advance rapidly, time could not be spared to obtain provisions. On the night of the 14th, the division arrived at the hacienda called *Peotillos*. The enemy, however, by making double marches, was close up, and took prisoner a soldier of the regiment of the Union, who, unable to proceed, lagged in the rear.

On arriving at the hacienda, worn down by hunger and fatigue, the troops expected that something necessary for their refreshment would be obtained. But, to their great disappointment, they found that the *Mayor Domo* (overseer) had run away, and had taken with him all the Indians, so that no cattle could be procured. In the tired state of the troops, sleep was even more grateful to them than provisions, and they consoled themselves with the expectation of a good meal

the next morning. Accordingly, early in the morning of the 15th, the poultry and pigs of the hacienda were laid under requisition, and the troops were animated with the prospect of a good breakfast; but at eight A. M. while it was cooking, advice was brought, that the advance guard of the enemy was within two miles of the hacienda; the troops were called to arms, and marched to a small eminence adjoining the hacienda, whence there was an extensive view of the plain.

The *hacienda de Peotillos* is the property of a convent in Mexico. It is valuable, and the buildings are extensive and handsome, situated at the foot of a range of hills running north and south, fifteen leagues north-west from the city of *San Luis Potosi*. East of the hacienda extends a large plain, bounded on that side also by hills. The plain, in many places, was planted with corn, but was much overrun with bushes, about ten feet high. The advance of the enemy had formed on the edge of one of these thickets, with a clear space of ground in its front, and near it was a corn field, strongly fenced in.

From the eminence, to which the division was marched, Mina reconnoitred the enemy. He saw that an action was now inevitable. To retreat in the presence of such a force, in the fatigued state of his infantry, and with the broken down horses of the cavalry, was destruction; and, to defend the hacienda, could only eventuate in the extermination of his little band. He therefore determined to strike a blow, trusting that it might be attended by some fortunate results. Having fixed upon his plan, he rode up to his troops, and stated to them, that the body of cavalry then in view, consisted of about four hundred men; that the cloud of dust rising some distance in the rear, was caused by the main body; but, he thought, that before it could get up, there might be time enough to defeat the advanced guard. The general concluded by asking them, if they were willing to march down to the plain and attack the enemy. The division had learnt to despise the enemy's cavalry, and from the knowledge they had acquired of their undisciplined state, and the great confidence they reposed in Mina, would cheerfully have engaged any number

of them. With three cheers, they, therefore, answered the general, that they would follow wherever he chose to lead them. He, thereupon, selected from the division, the Guard of Honour, the regiment of the Union, detachments from the cavalry and first regiment of the line, and the armed servants, composed of coloured boys, under the command of one of the general's servants, and marched to the conflict. His small band, including the general and staff, and a reenforcement of ten cavalry ordered up during the action, was *one hundred and seventy-two*. Of these, the Guard of Honour and regiment of the Union formed the line, and was commanded by colonel Young; a detachment from the Union, with that from the first regiment, and the armed servants, operated as skirmishers, and the cavalry covered the flanks. The residue of the division remained in the hacienda, to protect the stores, of which colonel Noboa was left in command.

Immediately on the arrival of the division at the cleared ground, the enemy made a furious charge; but were received with firmness. A well-directed fire checked their ardour, and they fell back, leaving twenty-two dead. But, knowing the powerful support that was coming up, and being joined in the meantime by a reenforcement of cavalry, they were thereby stimulated to continue the contest. They played round, occasionally charging, and harassed the division in this manner, until the main body, composed of infantry, cavalry, and cannon, arrived. It got up under cover of the bushes before described, which had concealed its approach, until the first intimation that the division had of its arrival was a tremendous fire from its line. Mina, on perceiving the overwhelming force, made a disposition to retire upon the hacienda, in order to re-unite his forces. But the enemy, encouraged by this movement, advanced, beating the charge and maintaining a heavy fire, by which several of the little band fell. The general, finding it would be impracticable to draw off his troops, halted them, and made some necessary movements. The enemy, thereupon, took up a position, with their left resting on the fence of the corn fields, and their right flanked by a cloud of cavalry. The division now saw the immense supe-

riority of the force they had to contend with, and destruction appeared inevitable. But the serenity and courage of their leader filled the men with enthusiasm, and increased the resolution they had formed to sell their lives as dearly as possible.

The infantry had been supplied with buck shot, and many of the men loaded with eighteen in addition to the ball. They committed havoc among the enemy. But the constant fire of the royalists considerably thinned the ranks of Mina's infantry, and his cavalry sustained some sharp conflicts, and suffered severely.

At length the enemy's cavalry were observed coming up in the rear, and lancing the unfortunate wounded; several of whom had still sufficient strength remaining to fire a musket, and continued, as they lay on the ground, to give battle till they were pierced with wounds. At this juncture the order was given to charge, and the line advanced with cool determination. The enemy evinced a strong disposition to withstand it, and remained firm till Mina's infantry were within a few paces. This was the critical moment which was to decide the fate of the division. Mina's infantry, animated by their resolution to conquer or die, gave three cheers, and, pouring into the enemy a destructive volley of buck shot, rushed upon them; they broke; and, throwing away their arms, fled with such precipitation, that only a very few were bayoneted. The cavalry, viewing with astonishment the fate of the infantry, partook of the terror. They dispersed, and fled in every direction. The general was unable to follow up his success, as the horses of the detachment from the cavalry, with him, were completely worn down. He, however, pursued the fugitives a short distance. Had colonel Noboa been animated with the gallantry of major Maylefer, who commanded the cavalry in the hacienda, not one of the enemy's infantry would have escaped. The major, anxious to signalize himself, repeatedly requested colonel Noboa to allow him to share in the glory of the day, and to reenforce the general with the cavalry; but, for some reason or other, he would not allow him, and thus the enemy's infantry escaped annihilation.

It was supposed, that the enemy, after flying a reasonable distance, and not finding themselves pursued, would rally, and then return to the attack. The division was, in consequence, ordered to the hacienda, where it arrived, after having been warmly engaged three hours and a half. The troops returned in high spirits, each man feeling conscious of having not only done his duty, but that he had escaped the destruction which, a few hours before, appeared to await him. Never was any man welcomed with more heart-felt congratulations, than those which Mina received from his troops. They rent the air with their cheers, and even the wounded seemed almost insensible to suffering, amidst the general joy.

The first impulse of the little band, on being dismissed, was to fly to the meal which had been left in cooking: but, to their keen mortification, they found, that the cooks, feeling as was natural, more interest in the fate of the battle, than in dressing the provisions, had deserted their trust. In their absence, the dogs of the hacienda had upset the pots, and had regaled themselves at the expense of the famished soldiers. Other provisions were speedily procured for cooking; but, in the meantime, an alarm was given, which, however, turned out to be unfounded.

Immediately on reaching the hacienda, the attention of the general was directed to the removal of the wounded from the field, and parties were sent out for that purpose, as well as to collect some of the fruits of the victory. Owing to the distance of the scene of action from the hacienda, and the want of the necessary means of conveyance, this duty was not finished till night had set in. Besides the wounded of the division, some of the enemy's were brought in also. From the same causes, only fifty stand of arms, one gun, three drums, some accoutrements, and eight mule loads of ammunition, were all that could be saved; of the latter, the enemy blew up a considerable quantity when they fled.

The return of the loss of the division was heavy, and a melancholy reduction from its strength. It was as follows:—

	Officers.		*Rank and file.*	
	killed.	*wounded.*	*killed.*	*wounded.*
Staff, - - - - -	1	1	0	0
Guard of Honour,	8	7	0	0
Cavalry, - - -	2	3	9	7
Regiment of the Union,	0	0	6	7
First Regiment, - -	0	0	4	0
Armed servants, - -	0	0	0	1
	11	11	19	15

Total killed and wounded, - - - - 56

Among the killed was Don Lazaro Goñi, a native of Navarre: the general was much attached to him. He was beloved by the army, and had gallantly distinguished himself.

On the body of a lieutenant colonel, killed in the action, was found the order of the day, which showed that the force actually engaged was *six hundred and eighty infantry* of the European regiments of Estremadura and America, and eleven hundred of the Rio Verde and Sierra Gorda cavalry; and that the rear guard consisted of three hundred men. This was subsequently corroborated by official documents, published at Mexico: so that Mina, with one hundred and seventy fatigued infantry, and badly mounted cavalry, defeated, in a plain, without even the advantage of a good position, upwards of seventeen hundred men. The royalist soldiers, who fled from the field of battle, returned to their homes, and, in vindication of their own conduct, exaggerated the numbers and intrepidity of Mina's troops, who, they said, were not men, but devils; and portrayed in melancholy colours, the dreadful execution committed by their fire. The general's fame thus spread in every direction, and paralyzed the enemy.

The action of Peotillos is yet mentioned with shame and mortification by the royalists. It was blazoned through the kingdom, and particularly in the central provinces, where it is known to all ranks of people. It will long live in the recol-

lection of the Mexicans; and perhaps the day is not distant, when the Mexican people will offer to the memory of Mina, those honours due to the hero of Peotillos. This, and other actions and circumstances, have created in their minds a strong predilection, and great respect for foreigners: a circumstance which would be attended by the most astonishing results, should a body of them ever invade the kingdom in the cause of its emancipation. If Mina, after this action, had had with him one thousand, instead of a hundred and fifty foreigners, he might have marched direct upon the capital of Mexico, and the royalist troops, instead of opposing him, would have flocked to his banners.

The battle of Peotillos incontestably proves the quality and character of the royalist troops, and shows what a few determined foreigners can achieve against them at the point of the bayonet. This is not the only action which can be adduced in support of this assertion. That of colonel Perry, near Soto la Marina, and that of El Valle de Mais, already noticed, and those of Pinos and San Juan de los Llanos, yet to be mentioned, were all gained over a superiority of numbers; and it will be seen in the sequel, that Mina's division was cut up by the enormous force of five thousand men, whose efforts even then would have been unavailing, if their success had depended entirely upon their personal prowess. If these are not sufficient proofs of the awful fall of the Spaniards from their once lofty elevation in the records of military fame, let the reader revert to the history of their struggle against the emperor Napoleon, and there he will find, that in the central provinces of Spain, the French, with one third their numbers, gained victories, and drove them from point to point, even after their armies were organized and disciplined.

The sanguinary style in which the order of the day, found as before mentioned, was couched, roused the indignation of the division against its author. It expressly forbade quarter, and so sure was Armiñan of the victory, which his great superiority of numbers was well calculated to inspire, that he exulted in having at length got the traitor Mina and his rabble *(gavilla)* into his power, not one of whom, the order said,

should escape. It modestly pointed out the description of the plunder which was to belong to the king, and that which was to be distributed among his troops, whom it strictly enjoined not to stop the work of extermination to plunder, but, that after the slaughter was finished, a division of the spoils should be made. The great disposer of human events had ordained, that matters should not correspond with the savage principles and predictions of colonel Armiñan. On the contrary, he received a merited punishment for his intended cruelties, by having his host put to flight by *one tenth* of its numbers. Armiñan with his staff, fled several leagues from the field of battle, before he deemed it safe to halt. His despatch to the commander of San Luis Potosi, was published in the Gazette of Mexico, and is a tolerably fair sample of all the royalist despatches, which have appeared in that paper, during the revolution. It is a composition of so much absurdity, and so palpably false, that the Spanish officers yet treat it with merited ridicule, and never touch upon the subject but with disgust. It is very brief, and sets out with saying, that he had encountered a column of men *determined to die killing;* he states, that *his cavalry took fright at something, and ran over his infantry, which threw them into disorder*, but that he *gained the battle*, and that he *only wanted two hundred more cavalry*, which he requested might be sent him, *to finish the total destruction of Mina.* He concludes this singular despatch, by saying, "*no hay mas papel*," "*I am out of paper*," else, we presume, he would have communicated, for the information of the Mexican people, a few more falsehoods.

During the action, a trumpeter was made prisoner by a major of the enemy's cavalry. The major immediately forced him to dismount, and then gave him his carabine to carry. The trumpeter soon ascertained that it was loaded, and when he found that the enemy's troops were in a state of confusion, he suddenly presented the carabine at the major, and peremptorily ordered him to dismount; he did so, and the trumpeter jumping into the saddle, ordered the major to march before him, observing to him, "as you are obliged to walk, sir, I'll not trouble you to carry the gun." So much pleased was the

major with the manner in which he was treated, that although Mina gave him his liberty, he subsequently joined a division of the patriots.

As the people of the hacienda had retired on the approach of the division, no emissary could be despatched, to obtain information of the enemy's situation. Mina knew, that ignorance of his force could not have been the cause of his signal victory, for the enemy had various opportunities of ascertaining it to a man; besides, they had taken one of the division prisoner, the preceding evening, from whom they had undoubtedly gained every information. He therefore expected, that, feeling ashamed at having been beaten by so contemptible a number, they would make a desperate attempt to retrieve the disasters of Peotillos, and it was accordingly judged best to steal a march on the enemy. The division was, therefore, put in light marching order, and the superfluous baggage was destroyed, to make room for the conveyance of the arms and ammunition taken from the enemy.

It has already been noticed, that some of the wounded of the enemy had been removed from the field, with those belonging to the division. Their wounds were dressed, and the same sympathy was extended to them as to those of Mina. The surgeon reported, that four of the division were so dangerously wounded, that it was impossible to remove them, and with reluctance the general was obliged to leave them. He, however, left a letter for the royalist commander, begging that he would pay the same attention to them, as had been shown to his own wounded. The parting with these brave fellows was extremely painful. They shook the general and their companions cordially by the hand, and wished them success, while bidding them, as they conceived, an eternal adieu. We have great pleasure in recording the fact, which we afterwards learned, that Mina's request was most scrupulously fulfilled; they were removed by order of the royalist commander, to San Luis Potosi, and were there treated in the most humane manner, particularly by the inhabitants.

Every thing being arranged, at two o'clock of the morning of the 16th, the division moved forward, and continued

advancing till noon, when it arrived at a rancho. Here, intelligence was received of the complete defeat of the enemy; and, as the fear of pursuit from that quarter was now at an end, the division took up its quarters for the night. As the rancho afforded every thing necessary for their refreshment, the troops fared sumptuously.

The next morning, the march was resumed: but two officers, from some motive which could not be developed, remained in the rancho; they afterwards fell into the hands of the enemy. At sun-set, the division passed through the pueblo of *Hideonda*. Its priest ordered the bells to be rung, and gave other apparent demonstrations of joy, to celebrate, as he said, the result of the battle. He endeavoured to persuade the general that he was warmly attached to the patriotic cause. But his conduct, it afterwards appeared, was guided by the most profound dissimulation; his real object being to get rid of Mina, in the safest way possible; and to obtain an exact account of his numbers. He afterwards boasted to the royalists, that he had counted Mina's troops as they remained formed in the square.

It should not be inferred, however, from this instance of hypocrisy, that the clergy are averse, in general, to the cause of liberty, excepting that portion of them which first drew their breath in Spain. It is true, that the European priests, from interest and prejudice, have been, and ever will be, hostile to the independence of the New World; but the sweeping imputations which have been cast on the Spanish *American* clergy, are without the least foundation. To accuse the Creole priests of a lack of *amor patriæ*, and an attachment to the interests of the Spanish government, could only arise from a total ignorance of their real character and situation. There is no part of the Mexican population which has more ample cause to desire, or in secret does more ardently pant after, a change of government, than its native clergy. The church preferments are regulated in an equally odious manner, with the civil and military. No Creole, whatever claims he may have on the score of family, or however great his talents may be, can ever aspire to the mitre. The subordinate livings only

are filled by Creoles; rare indeed are the instances of native divines attaining to any situation beyond that of a *cura* (rector of a parish,) and even the most valuable of these livings are presented to old Spaniards. Inequality of fortune is here even more striking than among the civilians; for no country presents such contrasts of wealth and poverty, luxury and misery, as Mexico. While a large proportion of the curas suffer extreme poverty, (many depending for subsistence entirely on the charity of their parishioners) the canons and bishops, and even some of the curas, roll in affluence and luxury. The Creole, once placed in a *curato*, there lives and dies, unnoticed,—unregarded; while he has the mortification to see daily arrivals from Spain of the refuse of the Spanish convents, who are destined to succeed to, and invariably monopolize, the clerical dignities and wealth.

The Mexican clergy are far less numerous than is generally supposed. According to a late enlightened traveller, M. de Humboldt, the secular clergy and regulars who wear the cowl do not exceed ten, and, including the lower orders attached to the convents, fourteen, thousand; being about three for every thousand inhabitants. The kingdom is divided into one archbishopric and eight bishoprics. The revolution has materially reduced their incomes; but, prior to that event, the dignitaries received the following immense annual revenues:—

Archbishop of Mexico,	$ 130,000
Bishop of La Puebla, -	110,000
——— Valladolid, -	100,000
——— Guadalaxara, -	90,000
——— Durango, -	35,000
——— Monterey, -	30,000
——— Yucatan, -	20,000
——— Oaxaca, - -	18,000
——— Sonora, - -	6,000

The canons, from seven to nine thousand dollars, and the sub-canons, from two to four thousand dollars, each.

The church revenue was derived principally from tithes. Its lands were in value about two and a half millions of dol-

lars; and it held mortgages to the immense amount of about forty millions of dollars.

When it is considered, that these immense sums flow into the coffers of a comparatively few individuals, of whom by far the greater proportion are old Spaniards, to the exclusion of the natives of the country, can it be for a moment supposed, or is it consistent with human nature, that a class of men so degraded and so abused, should uphold, from sentiments of attachment to the *Madre Patria*, a government which thus oppresses them? It is true, they have great power over their flocks, which they do not fail to exercise; but, as that dreadful engine of despotism, the Inquisition, has hitherto hung over their heads, and the civil government possesses all the physical force, which is always called forth in its aid, they are awed into subjection, and fear alone compels them to act a part, at which they would otherwise spurn. Were the clergy properly supported, they would soon convince the world that they are really patriots, and that the charges against them are foul aspersions.

In taking a retrospective view of their conduct, we find that the plan to drive despotism from Mexico was laid by *priests*; the father of the revolution (Hidalgo) was a *priest*. From the commencement, *priests* have held the first rank in the patriot armies: such were Morelos, Matamoros, and an infinite number of other distinguished members of the church. Those just mentioned, beside several hundreds of *priests*, have fallen victims, during the struggle for liberty; and there are yet many of the clergy, acting with the revolutionists, in the provinces of Mexico, Guanaxuato, and Valladolid.

The next day's march brought the division to a very extensive hacienda, called *Espiritu Santo*. Being on the frontiers of the provinces possessed by the patriots, and open to their incursions, the hacienda was fortified, and a garrison had been maintained at the owner's expense: but, not deeming it prudent to withstand an attack from the force which now approached, they had retreated to San Luis, having the proprietor, a European Spaniard, under their convoy. The majority of the male inhabitants had been compelled to depart; but the

division was met, at the entrance of the hacienda, by a troop of females, bearing a picture of the Virgin, and chaunting hymns. Fearing the worst from victorious troops, and judging what would be the conduct of Mina, by what they had experienced from others in the same situation, they adopted this method; hoping, by the intercession of their tutelar saint, to awaken the compassion of the conqueror, and to obtain that clemency which was seldom extended to them. Their fears soon subsided; and, to their very great surprise, the soldiers, instead of plundering them, as had been customary with the contending parties, paid for whatever they required. The division bivouaced without the hacienda, rations were provided, and the next morning it moved forward.

By a forced march, the division reached the *Real de Pinos*, at sun-set. The term *Real* implies a place where mines are worked. This town is in the intendancy of *Zacatecas;* is extensive and wealthy; and is located on an ascent, partly surrounded by hills, out of which the precious minerals are extracted. It was fortified; being defended, on the hill side, by a very wide and deep trench, which was raked from breastworks built on the tops of the houses. On the side next the plain, the streets leading to the *Plaza Mayor* (principal square) were blocked up by a wall, calculated only to afford protection against musketry, constructed with loop-holes, and strengthened by ditches. These would be unavailing against organized troops, as the heights completely command the place within musket-shot. It had, however, been once invested by a body of fifteen hundred patriots, and had resisted their attacks.

At the time Mina appeared before Pinos, it contained a garrison of three hundred men. He summoned the place to surrender, promising that respect should be paid to persons and property, and threatening the consequences that awaited its reduction by force. A refusal to this summons was returned; and Mina, thereupon, made preparations for storming the place. Soon after dark, parties were despatched to the different points of attack; and a smart skirmishing was maintained on both sides, but without causing any loss to Mina.

A little before midnight, a detachment of fifteen men from the Union was ordered up to reenforce a party of the first regiment. At that point, the houses were low, and afforded a communication from their terraces with the Plaza Mayor, extending some distance into the rear of the enemy's works. The small party of fifteen men, anxious to distinguish themselves, immediately mounted the terraces, and unobserved, as the night was dark, proceeded along them in silence. Arrived at the square, they lowered themselves down by their blankets; where, by the light of the torches of the enemy, they saw the reserve under arms, with five pieces of artillery: they advanced upon them as long as they could do so unperceived, then gave their usual three cheers, and rushed on the enemy with the bayonet. They were completely surprised, and, each one seeking his own safety in flight, abandoned the place, without farther resistance. Thus Pinos was carried, with the loss of one man. As the place had refused to surrender on honourable terms, and as it was taken by storm, Mina, in conformity with the laws of war, gave it up to be plundered; but, at the same time, charged the troops not to commit any act of personal violence. Large sums in specie were found by the troops, many of whom obtained more treasure than they could find means to carry away. They amply supplied themselves with clothing, which they much needed; few leaving the place without a richly embroidered cloak thrown over the shoulders, worth from one to two hundred dollars, and many of them far more valuable. A considerable magazine of military stores was also found here.

One of the soldiers of the Union regiment had entered a church, and was detected in the act of purloining the golden ornaments belonging to the altar. The general had always given the most positive orders to his troops, to respect all places dedicated to divine worship: and had declared his firm determination to punish with death whoever was found committing an act of sacrilege. On a former occasion, at Soto la Marina, he had caused a Creole to be shot, for breaking into a church at Palo Alto. He therefore, on being informed of the circumstance, immediately directed the soldier to be taken

out to the front of the division, and there shot:—thus proving to the royalists, that the men whom they called heretics, and whom they had represented to the people as sacrilegious plunderers, paid more respect to the sanctuaries of religion than themselves; for the royalist troops, throughout the revolution, have invariably polluted the churches, by using them as fortifications, barracks, and stables, whenever it suited their purposes. They have, on several occasions, despoiled cathedrals and convents of immense quantities of silver ornaments, and converted them into specie. It would not, therefore, be surprising, did the patriots follow this example: but to their honour be it said, that they are more scrupulous in these matters than their enemies. In various parts of the province of Guanaxuato, were seen churches in ruins, which the inhabitants had razed to the ground, rather than that they should be applied to the purposes of fortifications.

On the afternoon of the 19th, the general, after releasing on parole those who had fallen into his hands, evacuated Pinos, carrying with him a part of the trophies of his late victory, consisting of a stand of colours, four guns, several stand of arms, a large quantity of ammunition, clothing and accoutrements; but for the want of mules to remove them, fifteen cases of ammunition, two guns after being spiked, and several other articles, were thrown into a well.

It was expected that the long-looked-for junction with the patriots of the interior, would be formed in a few days. The road now traversed one of those extensive arid plains, with which the intendancy of Zacatecas abounds. A number of ruined houses, and quantities of human bones scattered here and there, gave an air of desolation to the plain, and indicated that the country had suffered severely by revolutionary ravages. For three days, the division marched through this solitary plain; and, as every thing had been laid waste, neither human being, nor beast, were visible. No provisions were to be procured: but, fortunately, the plains were covered with grass, which afforded the horses superabundant forage, and enabled them to go over much ground every day.

After dark, on the 22d, the guide became bewildered as to the right road, and the division halted. It had been three days with scarcely any nourishment; and as there was no prospect of immediate relief, their situation became unpleasant. Early the next morning, an officer, with a small escort of cavalry, was ordered to advance, and seek for habitations. He had not proceeded far, when he fell in with a small party of *patriots*, who were reconnoitring. The detachment being well uniformed, and as the patriots had not heard any thing of Mina's approach, they supposed the division to be hostile, and commenced firing. It was with difficulty the officer could bring them to a parley; which having accomplished, and remaining himself as a hostage, a few of the patriots came down to the division. The joy of the troops, at having at length, after surmounting so many obstacles, joined their allies, may readily be imagined. Every man, in his rejoicings, forgot his past sufferings, and contemplated with pleasure the field of glory which he supposed was in consequence about to be opened to him. The general immediately set off, to meet and pay his respects to the commandant of his allies, lieutenant colonel *Don Christoval Naba;* and, in the course of the forenoon, the general with the lieutenant colonel, returned to the encampment.

The grotesque figure of the colonel surprised the division. He wore a threadbare roundabout brown jacket, decorated with a quantity of tarnished silver lace; a red waistcoat; his shirt collar, fancifully cut and embroidered, was flying open, with a black silk handkerchief hanging loosely round his neck. He also wore a pair of loose, short, rusty, olive-coloured velveteen breeches, also decorated with lace; and round his legs were wrapped a pair of dressed deer-skins, tied under the knee by a garter. He had on a pair of country made shoes; and on either heel was a tremendous iron spur, inlaid with silver, weighing near a pound each, with rowels four inches in diameter. On his head was placed a country made hat, with an eight inch brim, ornamented with a broad silver band, in the front of which was stuck a large picture of the Virgin of

Guadalupe, enclosed in a frame, and protected by a glass. He was mounted on a fine horse, and was armed with a brace of pistols, a Spanish *Toledo*, and an immensely long lance. His men were equipped much in the same style; but were principally clad and armed with the spoils taken from the enemy. Though these Mexican Cossacks were thus singularly and rudely equipped, they were robust looking fellows, accustomed to hardships and severe privations, and full of courage.

The district, under the command of Don Christoval, was poor, which accounted for his appearance: but, in the rich districts, although the patriot officers are clothed in the same style that the colonel was, (which, by the by, is the dress of the Mexican peasantry, and is far from being unbecoming) yet they expend vast sums on their dress, and the equipage of their horses. Many of the troops are well uniformed, agreeably to their taste. The officers are literally covered with gold and silver buttons, lace, and embroidery; and to protect them from the weather, they wear a cloak, called "*mangas*," richly adorned with gold lace. They mount superb horses, which are generally richly caparisoned: the headstalls of the bridles are covered with silver; that part of the saddletree which shows itself, is mounted with silver; and the saddle is richly and elegantly embroidered with gold and silver thread: many of the latter cost from one to three hundred dollars. Some of the commandants run into the extremes of extravagance, in respect to their appearance; but the generality, except in the very poor districts, are richly and handsomely clothed.

Mina learned from Don Christoval, that five leagues distant was a national rancho, and that four leagues farther was the national fort called *Sombrero*. This was cheering intelligence; and in high spirits the troops resumed the march.

After dark, on the preceding evening, lieutenant Porter was unfortunately lost. In the morning, he was made prisoner by the royalists, and sent to the town of *Lagos*.

While the division was ascending the heights of Ybarra, a strong body of the enemy were seen in the plain below. Their appearance was as unexpected as unwelcome, to the exhausted

troops. As Mina expected they would bring him to action, he took the necessary measures to act on the defensive; and there is little doubt, that, had the enemy attacked him, his troops, flushed as they were with recent victory, and elated by being so near their allies, would have given him a warm reception. But for reasons inexplicable by the division, the enemy declined a combat, and allowed Mina to reach the rancho unmolested. There the troops found plenty of meat provided by their friends, which constituted a rich repast to men who had fasted for four days.

The enemy were encamped in a ruined hacienda, only two leagues distant from the division, and the next morning proceeded to the *Villa de Leon*. They consisted of the battalion of the European regiment of *Navarre*, and cavalry, seven hundred strong, under the command of *Don Francisco de Orrantia*, who, it appeared, had been ordered, after the defeat at Peotillos, from the city of *Queretaro*, to prevent Mina's junction with the patriots. The manner in which he obeyed his orders is here seen. Orrantia will become a conspicuous figure, in our subsequent pages; and it will be perceived that his future conduct exactly corresponded with his behaviour in this instance. The true cause of his declining an action with Mina, may be attributed to the respectful awe he entertained for the general.

Orrantia is one among the many Spaniards, sent to seek their fortunes in the colonies, without education or principle. It is by this class of Spaniards that the unfortunate Creoles have been so dreadfully oppressed, in every part of the New World. He soon became opulent; and was, and is yet, the owner of a large store, in the town of *San Miguel el Grande*, where he carries on a lucrative business. When the revolution broke out, he became a soldier; and his sanguinary enormities towards defenceless men, women, and children, recommended him to the then royal authorities, and he was promoted to the rank of colonel.

The officer who had remained with Don Christoval Naba as a hostage, and was sent on to his commanding officer, *Don Pedro*

Moreno, the commandant of Sombrero, after having exhibited his commission to Don Pedro, received from that commander an invitation for the general, welcoming him, and requesting that the division might be marched to the fort. At the same time, Don Pedro sent despatches to the patriot government, announcing the happy event, and the intelligence soon spread in every direction.

The general, with the staff, early on the morning of the 24th, proceeded to the fort. The division moved on soon after, and arrived at noon at the patriot fortress, where they were received with the most cordial demonstrations of joy. The patriots viewed the division with astonishment, and could scarcely believe it possible that such a handful of men could have penetrated such a distance to the interior, and through a country occupied by the royalists in every part of the route.

The division had been *thirty days* on the march, and had gone over a distance of *two hundred and twenty leagues*. It was harassed a considerable distance by the enemy, from which cause, and from the nature of the marches, no regular supplies of provisions could be procured. Frequently two, sometimes three, and even four days had elapsed, without rations : and in no instance did the division, except in El Valle de Mais, procure more than one meal a day, and that of meat only; fighting, during these scenes of privation and fatigue, two severe battles, and taking one town. The troops bore up against hardships, with cheerfulness, by observing that their leader fared like themselves, and in the hour of danger was invariably at their head, cheering them on.

The privations which the division suffered, did not arise from the want of means in that part of Mexico, to support an army, but from the circumstances of the general being obliged to seek the most unfrequented paths, and the constant and rapid marches which his situation obliged him to make, frequently not allowing him time to refresh his troops, except by a few hours sleep, which the troops generally preferred to employing the time in cooking. If Mina's force had been strong enough to have allowed him to advance by the high

road, the division would have fared differently, for few countries can afford more provisions for an army than Mexico, particularly in meat. A few leagues from the sea coast, where there is scarcely any population, bread is difficult to be obtained, but soon afterwards, an army reaches a delightful country, tolerably well settled, enjoying a fine climate, and where, in the towns, wheat bread can always be procured.

By looking over M. le Baron de Humboldt's chart, the only correct one extant, it will be seen that the distance by the king's high way (camino real,) from Soto la Marina to Sombrero, is not more than half the distance before mentioned, but Mina's peculiar situation obliged him to take circuitous routes, which can be seen by tracing the march on the maps.

The following is the return made by colonel Noboa, of the strength of the division, on its arrival at Sombrero :—

The general and staff, -	10
Guard of Honour, - -	23
Cavalry, - - - -	109
Regiment of the Union, -	46
First regiment of the line, -	59
Artillerists, - - -	5
Armed servants, - -	12
Ordinanzas, - - -	5
Total,	269

Of these, twenty-five were wounded; and the loss, in killed, and those who were taken prisoners on the road, amounted to thirty-nine. When it is considered that the division marched through so great an extent of enemy's country, enduring severe privations and sufferings, for thirty days, it will appear almost incredible, that under such circumstances, besides fighting two battles and carrying by storm one town, the loss sustained should have been so trifling. It affords a criterion, which will enable the reader to judge of the skill and enterprise of Mina, and of the good conduct of his officers and men.

The following munitions of war were brought away, after the different affairs:—

	Cannon.	Muskets.	Swords.	Lances.	Colours.	Drums.	Cartridge Boxes.	Uniforms.	Caps.	Boxes of ammunition	Flints.
Action at El Valle de Mais.	4	8	10	50	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
Action at Peotillos.	1	50	0	0	0	3	18	0	0	8	0
Capture of Sierra de Pinos.	4	38	20	50	1	1	34	60	60	7	400
Total	9	96	30	100	1	4	52	60	60	18	400

A much larger quantity would have been obtained, if time had allowed to collect them, or if mules could have been procured to transport them; for the want of the latter, in Pinos alone, fifteen boxes of ammunition, two guns, and other articles, were thrown down a well. Trifling, however, as these trophies were, the impression they produced on the patriots rendered them of great importance. Not one of the patriot officers had ever heard of Mina, nor had either they or the soldiers ever seen a foreigner; consequently, they judged of the merits of the division by the battles won, and spoils brought into the fort.

The downfal of the Spanish government in Mexico, was an event now viewed by the patriots as near at hand, and the whole country held by them, presented a scene of rejoicing.

The government of Mexico, at no period since the commencement of the revolution, had been in a situation so critical and embarrassing. It had calculated that the forces under Arredondo, Armiñan and others, would have been sufficient to have annihilated Mina; but when they learned that he had actually formed a junction with the patriots, they began to tremble for the consequences. They were conscious, that it would have been impossible for him to have penetrated so far into the interior of the country, with so inconsiderable a body of men, if the inhabitants had not secretly favoured his pro-

gress; and they were aware, from the results of the battles, that their own troops could not be relied upon for fidelity or valour. They were, besides, not ignorant of the fact, that Mina was well known and popular among the European troops then in Mexico; and consequently that there was a risk of disaffection spreading among that class of the soldiery. These reflections and fears, on the part of the authorities in the city of Mexico, were well founded; and there is no doubt existing in the mind of the writer, that if Mina had found the patriots concentrated, and in such numbers as he had calculated on; or, scattered as they were, had they embraced and zealously co-operated in his plans, he would have been enabled, not only to have resisted any force the royalists could have brought against him; but in all probability, to have conducted his enterprise to a successful issue. This opinion will be strongly supported by the facts to be related in the sequel.

The first objects of the general, on entering Sombrero, were to lay his services at the feet of the government, and to write to *Padre Torres*, a neighbouring chieftain, who bore the title of commander in chief. He also distributed his manifesto.

The fort was commanded by Don Pedro Moreno, mariscal de campo,* and had a garrison of about eighty infantry, and a few cavalry, tolerably well clothed and armed. Don Pedro had also under his orders, a body of about two hundred cavalry, commanded by Don *Encarnacion Ortiz*, who traversed the country in the vicinity of Sombrero.

Fort Sombrero, called by the royalists *Comanja*, was situated on the mountain of that name, about eighteen leagues north-west of the city of Guanaxuato, in that intendancy; from Lagos, in the intendancy of Guadalaxara, east-south-east, about five; and from the *Villa de Leon*, north-east six leagues. It was a rudely fortified neck of land, about five hundred paces long, stretching north and south, and elevated above the plain of Leon, about one thousand feet. At the north end,

* The Spanish grades, which are also observed by the patriots, are, from a colonelcy to brigadier; brigadier to mariscal de campo; thence to lieutenant general, and finally to captain general.

there was a narrow ridge or causeway, skirted by precipices, which connected the neck of land which formed the fort, with a chain of hills; one of which completely commanded it within long musket-shot. This alone rendered the fort untenable against any regular attack, but, as Moreno had successfully repulsed the royalists in one attempt made by them to enter it, he considered it as a very strong hold. On the east side, the fort was separated from the mountains by a very deep and wide barranca (ravine.) At the south end, the declivity of the hill was very steep: and on the west side was a bold descent to the plain. From the south end, at a less elevation than the fort, extended out into the plain two narrow ridges. Across the end of the causeway next to the fort, where it was about fifty paces wide, a miserably constructed wall had been run. It was flanked by two ill-planned one gun batteries, which raked the greatest part of the causeway, and the declivity of the hill in front; but could not annoy the ditch. This was the only regular entrance into the fort. In its rear was a conical hill, crowned by a work of one gun, which commanded the causeway. From the entrance, for some distance along the fort, it was naturally defended by perpendicular rocks and precipices; and beyond them, at the south or lower end, as it was called, it was artificially strengthened by a low wall, built of loose stones, but its real defence at this place, which was bad enough, consisted in the steepness of the hill. Seventeen pieces of crooked, rough, and mishapen artillery, from two to eight pounders, were mounted on various parts of the fort. The commandant's house, magazines, hospital, and the greater part of the soldiers' dwellings—barracks there were none—were built on the south side of the conical hill; some grass huts were also standing at the lower end, and crammed in amongst the rocks in various parts of the fort. The greatest of all its defects was, the want of water, the garrison depending on a supply from a brook, *(arroïjo,)* which ran through the bottom of the ravine, at a distance of nearly eight hundred paces from the fort. At the time the division entered the fort, it did not contain a week's provisions, and in every

point of view it was badly calculated to resist any serious attack.

Having conducted the general to the accomplishment of one of his most important objects, the formation of a junction with the patriots: we must, before we proceed with the narrative of Mina's exploits, resume the memoirs of the Mexican revolution, in order to show in a clear point of view, the then distracted and miserable state of the insurgents, and the insurmountable obstacles the general had to contend with, from the gross ignorance, ambition, inactivity, and want of principle, in many of their leaders at that epoch, which in fact, were the immediate causes of the failure of Mina's enterprise, and of the melancholy termination of his career.

CHAPTER V.

Reflections on the state of the Revolution after the dispersion of the Congress—General Don Manuel Mier y Teran—His talent and enterprise—His fall—General Don Guadalupe Victoria—General Osourno—General Don Ignacio Raïjon—General Don Josè Antonio Torres—Degraded state of the Patriots after he assumed the command—Reflections thereon.

WE have already mentioned the dissolution of the Mexican congress at Tehuacan by general Teran, and the dispersion of its members over the different revolted provinces. Although they subsequently made various attempts to re-establish themselves, yet they never succeeded in forming any civil government, meriting that name. The different military commandants were thus uncontrouled by any civil authority; and hence arose a long and fatal train of disasters to the patriot cause, terminating as might be expected, in a scene of anarchy among themselves, and of triumph to the royalists.

The patriot chiefs who gave the royalists most uneasiness and trouble, after the breaking up of the Mexican congress, were *Teran*, in the district of *Tehuacan; Victoria*, in the province of Vera Cruz; Osourno, in the district of Papantla, in the province of Mexico; and *Raïjon*, at the fort of Copero, in the province of Valladolid. There were other chiefs, whose names and operations we shall have occasion to notice; but on the conduct of the four chiefs just mentioned, during the year 1816 and the beginning of 1817, rested the fate of the Mexican revolution.

If those four individuals had discarded from their breasts the ambition and jealousy, which unfortunately had become the ruling passions with each of them, then would the patriot cause have triumphed; because the concentration of their forces, and a cordial co-operation in one grand system of action, would have enabled them to contend with any army that the royalists could at that time have raised.

Teran had under his command at least fifteen hundred men, tolerably well armed and disciplined; Victoria, about the same number, well equipped; Osourno, about two thousand, principally cavalry, the finest in the kingdom; Rayon and his brother had about eighteen hundred, in tolerable discipline. There were, besides, in the mountains of Misteca, under the valiant chief Guerrero, at least one thousand good cavalry.

The three first named chiefs were within *twenty leagues of each other*, and could at any time have formed a junction in *three days*. Rayon, who was at the greatest distance, could have united his forces with the patriots in the Baxio, or great plains of Guanaxuato; and menacing Mexico on that side, while the forces under Teran, Victoria and Osourno approached the capital on the other, the royalists would have been placed in a situation more alarming, than any which had occurred since the beginning of the revolution. The plan just mentioned, was the favourite object of Teran, who spared no exertions to effect it. The writer has perused the correspondence between Teran, and the other chiefs, and he does not hesitate to aver, that nothing but the fatal jealousy which they entertained against Teran, was the cause of the junction in question not taking place.

In order to evince the precarious situation of the royalists at that time, we have only to recount the great difficulties they experienced in subduing the patriot chiefs, notwithstanding all the disadvantages under which the latter were suffering from want of arms, and concert in their operations.

General Don Manuel Mier y Teran was a youth of only twenty years of age. He had received the best education which the city of Mexico could give him; was allied to a distinguished family; was modest in his demeanour; of temperate habits; an ardent advocate for the emancipation of his country; generous and brave, with a mind possessing extraordinary strength.

This youth, with a force which at no time exceeded *fifteen hundred* men, held the city and district of Tehuacan, in the very centre of the Mexican kingdom, bidding defiance to the

royal armies, and repelling their attacks for more than two years.

He built a fort on a high mountain in the vicinity of the city of Tehuacan, and there established his arsenal, a cannon foundery, and a manufactory of powder. Whenever he was pressed by a greatly superior royal army, he retired to his fort, called *Cerro Colorado*, and baffled all their exertions to dislodge him.

He was particularly attentive in establishing discipline among his troops, and almost daily performed in person the duties of a drill officer. There were no troops during the revolution, of whom the royalists stood so much in awe, as those of Teran's division. Such was their devotion to him, that he could lead them to combat against far superior numbers; and when he did not gain the victory, he conducted his retreat with so much skill, as to prevent the royalists from ever causing him much loss.

The city of Tehuacan being situated in the heart of a beautiful wheat country, of course Teran had abundance of provisions. The district is thickly-populated, and he could at any time have easily embodied ten thousand men, could he have procured arms for them. The few muskets among his troops were daily diminishing, and in the early part of 1816, he foresaw, that it would be impossible for him to keep his position much longer, unless he could obtain a fresh supply of arms. Many a time has the writer heard him exclaim, while his fine black eyes glistened with tears; "*Ah! if I had but six thousand muskets, and three thousand cavalry swords to arm the brave youths that are daily flocking to my standard, I would establish my country's independence, even without the aid of those patriot chiefs, who are now refusing to act in concert with me.*" So great was his anxiety to obtain muskets, that he solicited Victoria and Osourno, to co-operate with him in a plan to seize Tampico, or some port to the northward of Vera Cruz, for the purpose of opening a trade with the United States. But his overtures being sullenly rejected, he boldly determined to proceed through the province of Oaxaca, penetrate to the southward of the province of Vera Cruz, and seize

on the port of Guasacualco. It is difficult to convey to the reader, a proper idea of the obstacles which Teran had to surmount in this enterprise; but it is certain, that the great object he had in view, justified his making the attempt, and it is likewise certain, that his not succeeding in that extraordinary and important project, was owing to accidental circumstances, and not to the valour of his enemies. Having formed this determination, he departed in the month of July, 1816, from Tehuacan. His force consisted of *two hundred and forty infantry*, *sixty cavalry* and *two pieces of artillery*, with *twenty boxes of ammunition*. He was well aware, that he had to pass through an enemy's country, thickly populated, and that the royalists might bring fifteen hundred or two thousand men to act against him; but he was in hopes, that by making a rapid march, he should in ten or twelve days reach his place of destination, before the enemy could have time to concentrate their forces, or to penetrate his designs.

He had likewise reason to believe, that the great body of the Indian and Creole population of the province of Oaxaca would rise up in his favour, or, at all events would throw no obstacle in his way. He knew that if he once reached Guasacualco, he could take it with ease; and by strengthening its fortifications, he presumed it would be difficult for the enemy afterwards to dislodge him from his position. He had received unequivocal information, that the inhabitants in the vicinity of Guasacualco and *Tabasco* were ready to join him. He knew that the people of *Tehuantepec*, on the Pacific Ocean, were ripe for revolt against the Spanish government, and as the distance across the country from Guasacualco to Tehuantepec, was only about forty leagues, he would, by occupying those places, have two important sea ports; one on the *Mexican Gulf*, and the other on the *Pacific Ocean*. It was his intention, in case he succeeded in taking Guasacualco, to have immediately withdrawn his whole force from Tehuacan, and established his head-quarters either on the coast of the gulf, or at Tehuantepec. It therefore appears, that notwithstanding his friends and enemies considered his project, at that time, Quixotic and impracticable, yet, when it is examined with deliberation and

an unprejudiced eye, it was not merely a plan dictated by necessity, but the wisest under all circumstances, that Teran could have adopted in favour of his country.

The only error of which this enterprising youth can be justly accused, in relation to that expedition is, that he started from Tehuacan in the month of July instead of June.

The rainy season usually commences in the beginning of July in Oaxaca; in a few days the rivers swell; and the great plain along the sea coast of the province of Vera Cruz, to upwards of one hundred miles from the ocean, becomes absolutely impassable for an army. Teran was not ignorant of this fact; but when some of his friends told him it was too late in the season to make the attempt, he replied; "that he had known some years when the rains did not set in until the middle of August; that at that moment the whole country was perfectly dry; that he only wanted ten days more of dry weather to reach his intended point; that he was in hopes the God of nature would not defeat his project; that if it was delayed, he could not put it into execution until the next year; and finally, that if he did not succeed, he calculated on being able to return to Tehuacan, before the enemy could take measures to cut off his retreat."

In fact, so determined was he on making the experiment, that all the arguments used to dissuade him from it, were unavailing, and accordingly, he left Tehuacan, with the force before mentioned, about the 24th of July.

He met with little opposition during the first five days of his march. He took the towns of *Soyaltepec*, *Iscatlan*, *Oxitlan*, and several other places of considerable importance, some of them containing a population of from five to seven thousand Indians. They received him in the most cordial manner, and hoisted the flag of the Mexican republic wherever he appeared. The different skirmishes he had with some divisions of royal troops, convinced him that he had little to fear from their opposition. He proceeded without interruption to a place called *Tustepec*, about half way to the place of his destination. His progress was there impeded by a violent rain, which con-

tinued without any intermission (except for about two hours each morning) *for ten days*. Not only was the whole country between Tustepec and Guasacualco inundated, but the greater part of the route he had marched was likewise overflown; so that even a retreat back to Tehuacan was not practicable at that time. Thus hemmed in at Tustepec, he had to depend on the good offices of the Indians, for provisions for his army. In this he was not disappointed. They gave him every evidence of their fidelity to the patriot cause, and of their hatred to the royalists. They sent out spies to discover the movements of the enemy, who soon gave Teran information, from the cities of Oaxaca and Vera Cruz, which convinced him that his designs were now known to the royalists, and also that they were making formidable preparations, as well to impede his progress to Guasacualco, as to cut off his return to Tehuacan. Teran was not dismayed by this intelligence, and only regretted that the incessant rains prevented him from moving either to the right or left.

Some intelligent Indians at Tustepec informed him, that if he could reach a place called *Amistan*, about eight leagues distant, he would then get into a road upon which it was practicable to proceed towards Guasacualco, even during the rainy season; but that, to get to Amistan at that time, it was necessary to cut a new road. No sooner did Teran receive this suggestion, than he called together the governor and principal Indians of Tustepec, requesting their advice touching the opening of this new road. They represented it as being a difficult task, but offered to afford him all their aid to accomplish it. Accordingly, two hundred men of Teran's division, with all the able-bodied Indians of Tustepec, began the undertaking. They completed, in ten days, a road, leading through swamps, which the royalists afterwards acknowledged to be a work that appeared to them impossible to have been executed in less than six months. Teran superintended the whole of the operations; and his indefatigable exertions, united with his ingenuity, excited the admiration of his soldiers, as well as of the Indians. Causeways and floating bridges were thrown over

places which had before been considered as entirely impassable; proving what men can accomplish, when urged by necessity, and stimulated by an enterprising leader.

On the 5th of September, he reached Amistan, with his whole force. He there learned that the royalists were preparing to attack him; and were actually advancing, with a powerful force, towards Tustepec, under an impression that it was impossible for him to have proceeded any further on his route to Guasacualco. Five leagues from Amistan was a royalist post, called *Plaïja Vicente*, situated on a river. At this post there was a valuable deposit of cochineal and dry goods, belonging to the merchants of Vera Cruz and Oaxaca, which Teran immediately resolved to seize upon. On the 6th, he reconnoitred the place, and ascertained that the enemy had a force there of about one hundred men. On the 7th, he advanced with the division to the bank of the river, immediately opposite to Plaÿa Vicente. On the 8th, in the morning, a canoe came from the opposite side, with two Indians, who informed Teran that the royalists had, the preceding night, precipitately abandoned the village. To ascertain the truth of their report, Teran kept one of the Indians as a hostage, and sent the other, with two of his own soldiers, across the river in the canoe. On their return, they confirmed the intelligence. Some of Teran's officers then volunteered to pass the river, which he imprudently permitted. They came back with such flattering accounts of the immense quantity of dry goods and cochineal, which they had seen in the stores, that the whole division were eager to gain possession of the place. As there was but one small canoe, Teran ordered rafts to be made, to transport the whole of his force across, in the evening, or the next morning.

In the meantime, the canoe had taken over about twenty men; when Teran, fearing that they might commit some excesses among the inhabitants, or indulge too freely in the wines and brandies which were in the stores, crossed the river, and joined them himself, with three of his officers. He was making the necessary dispositions in the village, by posting sentinels at the doors of the warehouses, and endeavouring to

gain the good will of the inhabitants, when suddenly an Indian, running into the place, gave the alarm that the Gachupins were upon them. Teran was in hopes that it might prove a false alarm; but, with great presence of mind, ordered his men, who consisted of *twenty-three officers and soldiers*, to form, and follow him. They proceeded to that part of the village upon which the royalists were said to be approaching, and there beheld a body of cavalry and infantry descending a hill, within two hundred yards of them.

Teran, at that moment, might have fled to the river; and such of his men as could swim, might have saved themselves. But whether he supposed that the enemy's force was less than it proved to be, or thought that by a display of firmness he should be able to check them until he could receive a reenforcement from the other side of the river, are points upon which we can give no opinion. It is certain, however, that he took post in the rear of a small house, and there gallantly sustained the attack of the enemy. The royalists appeared several times disposed to retreat: but seeing that Teran received no reenforcement, and observing at length that the main body was on the other side of the river, they made a bold effort, and broke into the little band. He and two others were so fortunate as to reach the river, and, amidst a shower of bullets, crossed it by swimming. All the rest of the party were bayoneted, or taken prisoners.

On the 9th, Teran made his dispositions for transporting his force to the other side of the river, about two hundred paces below the village, with the determination to attack it, and take revenge for the serious misadventure he had met with. At five o'clock in the afternoon, he issued orders for the division to prepare for embarking on the rafts, his two field pieces being placed on the largest one, so as to cover its landing. When every thing was ready for the attack on Playa Vicente, it was suddenly suspended, by the unexpected intelligence brought by an Indian from Amistan, that the royalists were within two leagues of that place, and intended to force their march, so as to be able to reach Teran's encampment by day-light next morning.

Teran at once perceived his critical situation, and knew that if he remained where he then was until the enemy came up, it would animate the royalists in Playa Vicente, and place him between two fires. As soon, therefore, as it was night, he broke up his encampment, and marched about three leagues, until he came to an excellent position for mounting his two field pieces. He had scarcely time to make preparations for battle, when the approach of a party of cavalry announced that the enemy were near. One of Teran's sentinels hailed them, at the same time discharging his musket. This was a circumstance totally unexpected to them, as they had been positively assured by spies, that at the close of the preceding day, Teran was at the river: however, they conceived it prudent to halt until day-light. In the meantime, Teran was improving every minute. He knew that the enemy's force principally consisted of cavalry, and therefore threw obstacles in the road, by cutting down the trees, and filling the path with bushes; behind which he placed troops, with the field pieces, in ambush. We have understood from several royal officers, who subsequently examined the ground, and the arrangements which Teran had made, that it was scarcely credible so much could have been executed, in the short space of four hours, by a division of two hundred and seventy-five men.

About half an hour before day-break, Teran visited each of his ambuscades, entreating his men not to fire precipitately, and to remain steady at the posts assigned them. He obliged each officer and soldier to promise him, that in no event would they become prisoners, but die or conquer. He did not conceal from them, that he was aware the enemy were far superior in numbers; but declared that he felt confident of defeating them, if the republican division would only behave as they had frequently before done. No body of men, perhaps, ever had greater confidence in a chief, than this division reposed in Teran. They anticipated the victory they were about to gain, and the surprise and confusion which would be occasioned to the enemy, by the novel dispositions which Teran had made.

At day-break, the royalists were discovered, at the distance of about half a mile. A stream of water lay between them and

Teran; and, although it was not more than twenty yards wide, yet it was deep, and difficult to pass, from the rapidity of the current. On approaching it, the royalists halted, and seemed cautious in their movements: but, after about an hour's delay, they crossed it. In the meantime, Teran, with about thirty men, had advanced to meet them, intending to feign a hasty retreat, and thereby to draw the enemy into the ambushes which had been laid. This stratagem succeeded: their cavalry pursued him, at full speed, into the ambuscade, until they reached the place where the two masked field pieces were stationed. From these a destructive fire was commenced, which threw them into confusion, and compelled them to retire towards the rivulet. But it was now too late to retreat: they were entrapped; and, at a given signal, the parties in ambuscade opened their fire, charged, and in a few minutes completely routed the enemy. In attempting to pass the ford of the creek, the fugitives so crowded on each other, that many were drowned. Teran, promptly availing himself of these circumstances, closely pursued the enemy for nearly a league on the other side of the creek, making a dreadful havoc among their infantry, as well as cavalry. In vain the officers of the royalists attempted to rally their men. The panic became general; every one endeavoured to save himself by flight.

The result of this action was, on the part of the royalists, *one hundred and twenty killed*, a considerable number wounded, and sixty prisoners. Teran's loss was nine killed, and thirteen wounded. It appeared, from official documents found on the prisoners, that the royalist force consisted of *six hundred cavalry*, and *five hundred and sixty-three infantry*, commanded by general *Topete*. They had been several weeks collecting this force, at *Tlacotalpan* and *Alvarado*, in the province of Vera Cruz; but, in consequence of the heavy rains, were unable to meet with Teran at an earlier period.

Teran obtained from the prisoners such information as compelled him, reluctantly, to abandon his project of proceeding to Guasacualco. He learned, that the commandant general of Oaxaca was collecting all the disposable force of the province, in order to pursue him; that another formidable expedition

was preparing, at Vera Cruz, for the same purpose; and that two Spanish vessels of war had been sent to Guasacualco. As his original plan had been to seize the place by surprise, and this being now no longer practicable, he resolved on endeavouring to get back to Tehuacan, as early as possible. This he effected, by masterly movements, eluding all the plans of the royalists to intercept him, and overcoming obstacles which his enemies had considered insurmountable at that season of the year.

After his return to Tehuacan, he renewed his overtures for conciliation and co-operation with Victoria and Osourno; but neither the one nor the other would assent to his proposals.

The viceroy Apodaca now bent all his energies to destroy these rival chiefs, first directing his attention to Teran. An army, composed of the flower of the royal forces, and consisting of about four thousand troops, was despatched to invest Tehuacan.

Teran prepared for the attack, with his usual alacrity. He sent the women and children to fort Colorado, and remained in the city, hoping that he might be able to repel the enemy. He fortified the convent of *San Francisco*, and there awaited the attack. The royalists surrounded the convent, and cut off the communication with the fort of Colorado. The whole effective force of Teran, in the convent, did not exceed five hundred men; but he had made such admirable preparations for defence, that the royalists did not venture to assault the place, contenting themselves by waiting the result of a formal siege, and cutting off all supplies of provisions. Teran, finding himself thus straitened, and his provisions and water being nearly exhausted, seeing no hopes of external relief, and at the same time not wishing to sacrifice uselessly the lives of his brave companions, at length accepted articles of capitulation, proposed to him by the royal commander.

We regret that we have not a copy of the terms of surrender, because their liberal tenor would show the high respect entertained by the royalists for Teran. They granted him terms that had been invariably refused to all others of the revolutionary chiefs. We likewise feel satisfaction in stating,

that this capitulation was scrupulously and honourably fulfilled, on the part of the royalist commander, and the viceroy.

After the patriots had lost Tehuacan, the royalists found themselves in a condition to send a powerful force against Victoria and Osourno.

Don Guadalupe Victoria at no time had under his command more than two thousand men; but he was so well acquainted with the fastnesses of the province of Vera Cruz, that the royalists never could bring him to a general action. In vain they sent superior forces to attack him; in vain they drove him from one position to another; for, as fast as they destroyed part of his forces in one place, he recruited them in another. More than twenty times, the Mexican Gazette has published that Victoria was slain, and his party annihilated: but, a few days after those false and pompous accounts, we have heard of Victoria suddenly springing up, attacking and capturing convoys of merchandise, seizing some strong holds, and throwing the whole country into consternation. At the head of one hundred and fifty or two hundred cavalry, he performed some of the most daring exploits that were effected during the revolution; and his personal courage and activity were universally acknowledged, even by his enemies. More than four-fifths of the population of Vera Cruz were in his favour. Wherever he went, provisions were secretly or openly furnished him. Had he possessed muskets, there were from ten to fifteen thousand men ready to accept them, and join his standard. To the want of arms and munitions of war, and to no other cause, must be attributed his eventual failure. He obtained a few hundred muskets from New Orleans, during the time he possessed the ports of Boquilla de Piedra, and Nautla, on the coast of Vera Cruz; but, after those places were retaken by the royalists, at the close of 1816, or beginning of 1817, he was totally cut off from all foreign supplies. The royalists have since proclaimed that he was slain, and his forces destroyed. Whether this be the fact or not, we cannot decide; but it is certain, that since the middle of the year 1817, the patriots have not had a formidable party in the province of Vera Cruz.

The forces under Osourno were likewise, about the same time, destroyed or dispersed; and he, as well as his principal officers, we learn, have accepted the royal pardon. Osourno, about the close of the year 1815, was a formidable foe to the royalists, as he had at least two thousand of the finest cavalry in the kingdom, and spread terror even to the gates of Mexico. He and his officers soon became too fond of their personal gratification, indulging in every species of luxury, and directing all their exertions to the acquisition of plunder, and the spreading of devastation. One of his officers, of the name of Vicente Gomez, became celebrated for his cruelty, as well as activity. This monster, under the pretext of retaliation, not only shot his prisoners, but frequently mutilated and tortured them. On one occasion, he boasted of having put to death some European Spaniards, without spilling a drop of their blood,—having caused them to be buried alive. So great was the terror that this wretch spread over the country, that the royalists tried every possible means to gain him over to their party. They at length succeeded, by offering him an equal rank in the royal service, with that which he held among the patriots; and there can be no doubt, that, by his activity and management, he contributed much to accelerate the fall of his former commander, Osourno.

Don Ignacio Rayon, in the province of Valladolid, at the important fort of *Copero*, had resisted, for eighteen months, all attempts of the royalists to dislodge him. He, as well as his two brothers, had acted a conspicuous part, since the commencement of the revolution. He was averse to the sanguinary warfare that had been carried on, and was disgusted at the selfish conduct of the patriot chiefs. Although he was known to be a brave and able officer, warmly attached to the cause he had espoused, yet he frequently declared his resolution to surrender to the royalists, if the patriots persisted in rejecting his advice, and his plans for forming a junction of their forces. He at length did capitulate, and the fort of Copero fell into the hands of the royalists.

We cannot, for want of the proper documents, state with precision the dates when these several disasters occurred to

the patriots, under the command of Teran, Victoria, Osourno, and Rayon, further than that they took place during the years 1816 and 1817.

Subsequently to those events, the royalists gradually re-subjugated many of the revolted districts; placing garrisons in every town and village, to awe the people into obedience to the royal authority. In this manner, they succeeded in forming a chain of fortifications from north to south, cutting off the communication between the patriots of the eastern and western provinces, who still roamed through the country in formidable bodies, but without co-operation among themselves.

The direction of these revolutionary bodies, thenceforward, fell into the hands of the most illiterate of the Mexican population, men whose sole aim was power, that they might by its aid acquire wealth. Many of these men were, from common field labourers, raised to the rank of colonels and brigadiers. Their conduct became licentious and cruel in the extreme; and, as several of them were daring and enterprising, they were equally dreaded by royalists and patriots.

Men of education, principle, or talent, among the revolutionists, were no longer respected. Any attempts made by them to establish order, were decried as tending to despotism; while they were insulted, their property was taken from them, under the plea that the public service required it; their lives were threatened; and they dared not even murmur against the decrees of their tyrannical oppressors. Thus, on the one side, terrified by the conduct of their own party, and, on the other, allured by the flattering offers of the royalists, they at length sought safety under the banners of Spain, where these sincere patriots now are, *friends to liberty*, but *enemies to anarchy*.

The kind of leaders which we have just mentioned, had, nevertheless, extensive districts under their command, in the western provinces; and each petty commandant of a pueblo, imitating the example of his chief, gave loose to his passions, studying only the means of his personal gratification.

They had nominated to the supreme military command, a priest, named *Don José Antonio Torres*, who had been raised to the rank of mariscal de campo. In the early stages of his

career, he gave some evidences of valour; but he no sooner became possessed of power, than he displayed the character of a fiend. He was cruel, vindictive, and avaricious, sparing neither patriot nor royalist, to gratify his passions. He levied impositions, in the most arbitrary manner, upon every wealthy individual within the range of his command; and continued to treat every Creole, from whom there was the slightest probability of meeting opposition to his views, with such indignity, that many of those remaining were reluctantly compelled to fly for protection to the royalists. On the most frivolous pretexts, he had put to death several persons whom he suspected, either of being hostile to his conduct, or as likely to become his rivals. Jealousy was the predominant feature in his character; nor did he regard what sacrifices he made, to rid himself of any man from whom he anticipated opposition. Notwithstanding his vicious propensities and base traits, yet he possessed the good quality of sincerely adhering to the cause of the republic. Towards the Spaniards, he entertained an unconquerable antipathy. The many overtures that were made to gain him over to the royal party, were treated by him with disdain; and neither offers of rank nor money could induce him to waver in his determination. The following anecdote will more clearly exhibit his enmity to the Gachupins; and demonstrate, that when his patriotism was involved, even the ties of relationship were held of no account.

On one occasion, there fell into the hands of the royalists two of his younger brothers. They were compelled to write to him, telling him, that their lives depended upon his embracing the royal cause; that, did he not do so, they would be shot. To this appeal, he returned the following answer: "The proposition of the royalists has served only to rouse my indignation. If the enemy do not shoot you, beware how you fall into my hands at any future period. In such event, that death, you have escaped from the royalists, will be received at my hands, for having dared to place your lives in competition with the interest of your country, and insinuating to me terms so dishonourable."

Torres had under his command an immense extent of country, which he parcelled out, like the feudal system of old, into districts or *comandancias*. It was a prominent feature of his policy to select for the government of these districts, men whose gross ignorance, he conceived, would render them subservient to his will, and proper subjects to promote his views of sole dominion. These commandants followed the example set them by Torres, directing their principal attention to personal enjoyments. Without a government capable of enforcing obedience, they were uncontrouled in their proceedings, and acted according to their own pleasure in their respective comandancias. The revenues of the state they looked upon, not as belonging to the public, but as their individual property, and considered, they were conferring an obligation on the republic, when any of its resources were devoted to its service. The forces raised were such only as they thought proper, and were taught to look upon their commandants as masters, whose mandate *alone* they ought to obey. The peasantry were regarded as vassals devoid of every privilege, upon whom they had a right to heap injuries, and the soldiery to make them a prey with impunity. Each commandant became a petty tyrant in his district; the interests of the country were no longer viewed as primary objects, but were replaced by a devotion to self-gratification; while the chief aim and end of exertion, was to preserve the good will of the *sultan* Torres. On his part, he was a proficient in the arts necessary to ingratiate himself into the good opinion of these men. He would gamble and drink with them; would run races and fight game cocks, till the parties were stript of their money, in which science Torres was extremely dexterous. In short, as long as the commandants conformed to his instructions, he neither investigated nor cared, what was their conduct. It was therefore by no means extraordinary, that Torres, after being appointed commander in chief, maintained an absolute power; that his orders were implicitly and promptly obeyed. Had they emanated from a man celebrated for correct and upright conduct, more awe and reverence could not have been attached to them.

His head-quarters were fixed on the top of the mountain of Los Remedios, which he fortified, at the cost and ruin of many families round its base. There, surrounded by women and all the luxuries the country afforded, he became indolent and capricious, issuing the most arbitrary decrees, and like a demigod, from his lofty seat, smiled at the effects of his imperious mandates upon the faithful Americans by whom he was upheld. When in the zenith of his glory, he was to be seen surrounded by sycophants and women, singing the most fulsome songs in his praise, while, extended on a bed, fanned by a delicate hand, he would listen with rapture to the grossest adulation, and indulge in loud bursts of laughter, arising from his heart-felt satisfaction: swelling and exulting with vain glory, he would often exclaim, "*Yo soy xefe de todo el mundo*,"—*(I command the world.)* Such was the character of the leader of the revolutionists in the western provinces. It may be asked, how could such a man be allowed to exercise power so arbitrary? why did not the citizens hurl him from his seat on Los Remedios? Bayonets, and the infatuation of the peasantry, were his protection. Whilst he preserved the good will of the commandants, he had nothing to fear from a disarmed people, whose veneration for him as a priest, covered all his crimes. The fear he had instilled into his dependants, was likewise another powerful auxiliary in the maintenance of his authority; for, on whomsoever his suspicion rested, either secretly or openly was put to death.

To portray in all its hideous forms, the system of despotism and terror, which marked the annals of the power of Torres, is a task not congenial to the feelings nor easy to perform. One or two instances will be sufficient, out of the many which could be adduced, to elucidate his baseness. From his inactivity, the enemy were daily gaining ground, and were permitted, unmolested, to fortify themselves in almost every town and village in the Baxio. There however remained, El Valle de Santiago, Penjamo, and Puruandiro, three flourishing, wealthy, handsome, and populous places, within a few leagues of each other. In order to check the progress of the royalists, he fancied that the most effectual and least dangerous method, was to raze

these towns to the ground. Forgetting, or not reflecting, that every other place but those three, being held by the enemy, the sacrifice of these towns could produce no possible benefit; and without considering for a moment, that the faithful Americans would suffer, without the possibility of any good resulting therefrom to the cause, he sent orders for the inhabitants to remove their effects in six hours, after which, *each one* was to destroy their own costly and elegant mansion. In every instance it was obeyed, though in some, its execution was attended with aggravating circumstances. The inhabitants of Puruandiro petitioned for an extension of time, to enable them to remove their property. This petition was refused, and before the expiration of three hours, Torres despatched his soldiers, who, running up and down the streets with lighted torches, fired every building, with the exception of the churches. In Puruandiro, as well as the other places, families who were in easy, and many in affluent circumstances, were obliged to retire to little farms, and there live in indigence and misery. The towns of San Felipe, Uruapa and others, were treated in the same manner, and as a proof how futile and cruel were such measures, the enemy have since, and do at this moment, occupy every one of those places.

The next circumstance we select, displays all the cruelty and savage ferocity of a barbarian. The people of the Baxio are noted, as being more attached to the revolution, than any other part of the Mexican empire. Aversion to, as well as fear of the royalists, caused the male inhabitants, who could do so, to abandon their houses, and fly to the mountains, whenever they made their appearance. Padre Torres directed his march with some troops to an ill-fated hacienda, called Guanimaro, not far from Penjamo. The people, perceiving the approach of soldiery, fled to a hill close by the hacienda. On entering, the Padre broke forth into a torrent of abuse, because they had ran away from him, as he construed their good intentions. He ordered them to return; formed them in the environs of the hacienda, and decimated them on the spot. The victims of his wanton barbarity were immediately confessed, and, unmoved by their entreaties or solemn adjurations that it was dread

and horror alone for the enemy, that caused them to flee; turning a deaf ear to the supplications of their wives, children and relatives, he ordered them to be shot, in the presence of their friends and kindred.

We have been thus particular in drawing the character of Padre Torres, because in the sequel it will be seen, that the conduct of this man, towards the brave Mina, was the sole cause, notwithstanding all the obstacles he had to contend against, that he did not succeed in his enterprise.

The soldiery over whom the sway of Torres and his satellites extended, were hardy and courageous. Their numbers were at least seven thousand; and, though not all armed with muskets, yet they were expert lancers and excellent horsemen. They were, however, entirely destitute of discipline, were under no command, miserably paid and clothed, without union, each man living at his own home, and scattered over the comandancia. They were the servants of their masters the commandants, and had been so long brought up to irregularity, that they could desert and fly from a field of action with impunity. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that they were no longer able to cope with their antagonists, whose only superiority consisted in remaining united on the field. In point of personal courage and the quality of their horses, the royalists were far inferior, nor had they any good cavalry until it was formed from the insurgents themselves. When disciplined and taught to fight with order, the patriots invariably defeated their antagonists.

It must be recollected, that while this unfavourable picture of the patriot chiefs generally, is drawn, some few, although their conduct had its faults, were actuated by a love of country. Innate depravity, as was the case with the majority, had no influence over their actions.

The peasantry gave the most unequivocal proofs of attachment to the patriot cause, for, ill-treated, abused and sacrificed, as they were by the patriots, as well as the royalists, they continued faithful to the republican standard.

Torres, in order to exhibit the appearance of having a civil government, instituted one after the model of the late congress.

It was composed of a president, *Don Ignacio Ayala*, two members, *Don Mariano Tercero*, and *Dr. Don José San Martin*, and a secretary of war, *Don Francisco Loxero*. They were, however, the mere creatures of Torres, acted in conformity to his wishes, and in fact, instead of controling his operations, they strengthened his power over the people. Although the government issued decrees, yet they were obeyed or disregarded, as suited the caprice or interest of Torres and the commandants, who attended solely to his mandates.

The new congress bestowed on Torres the rank of lieutenant general, and commander-in-chief of all the forces of the Mexican republic. The royalists, at that time, had garrisoned all the principal towns; but the patriots still had control over the country, even to the very walls. They were scattered in guerilla parties, principally cavalry, consisting of from fifty to a thousand men; and their excursions extended from the *Sierra Gorda*, to the shores of the Pacific ocean. In reality, they were little better than bodies of banditti. When they knew of the approach of a division of the royalists, they fled to impregnable stations in the mountains, and there waited until the enemy retired; then, descending to the plains, they renewed the same scenes of drunkenness, gambling, and crimes of every description.

The royalists were not idle spectators of these disorders, and the distracted condition of the patriots, but daily improved the advantages they offered.

Such was the state of the Mexican revolution, when Mina arrived at the fort of Sombrero. The disasters we have related were then only partially communicated to him; and he still fondly indulged the hope, that it was practicable to remedy the evils which the revolutionists had suffered. He flattered himself, that the gallant officers he had brought with him, as well as the soldiers of his little band, would, by their influence and example, infuse a new ardour into the patriots, promote their union, and enable him to strike a decisive blow against the royalists.

The patriots still retained possession of three forts; those of *Sombrero; Los Remedios*, about sixty miles off; and *Jau-*

xilla, at an equal distance from Remedios, where the congress held their sittings.

There likewise remained among the patriots a few men of distinguished character, who, notwithstanding they had become disgusted with the outrageous conduct of the revolutionists, yet entertained so implacable a hatred to the Spaniards, that they preferred seeking an abode in the forest, rather than accept the royal pardon. Among these men, was *Don José Maria Liceaga*, the president of the congress at Apatzingan, who signed the constitution. But none of these worthy men now retained any command or influence: education, talent, and pure patriotism, were proscribed, under such men as Torres and his party.

Among the military commandants who then acted under Torres, there were few capable of reading or writing. They usually employed a secretary, on whom devolved the duty of reading and answering despatches. When an important paper was to be signed, the commandant impressed it with a seal, bearing his name, and ornamented with some rude insignia.

It was with men of this character that the unfortunate Mina was destined to co-operate. He beheld around him nothing but gross ignorance and anarchy, which threatened to render all his efforts ineffectual. Disappointed and mortified, he yet concealed his chagrin, except to a few of his confidential officers. He had anticipated a different scene; and, although he never had calculated on finding the revolutionary forces under military discipline, or with skilful officers, yet he had portrayed them in his mind as enthusiasts in the cause of liberty, and had always understood that they were a brave and hardy race of people. During his recent march from the coast to Sombrero, he had received the most positive proofs of the innate courage of the Creoles; and was therefore still flattered with the hope that it would be in his power to succeed in emancipating Mexico. He considered his junction with the patriots, even under all the disadvantages in which he found them placed, as the first great step to his future glory and success; and, however extravagant such calculations may at present appear, it is evident to the mind of the writer, that if Tor-

res, and the rest of the patriot chiefs under his orders, had sacrificed their private views to their country's cause, and magnanimously and cordially co-operated with Mina, appointing him commander-in-chief, he would have found a superabundance of men and resources, not only to have checked the progress of the royalists, but to have given to the revolution a brighter aspect than it had borne at any previous time, since the commencement of the struggle.

It is well known to the writer, that at the period we are speaking of, nearly every regiment of European and Creole troops, in the city of Mexico, and in the middle provinces, were suspected of disaffection, and of a disposition to revolt. Could Mina have maintained his position for a few months after he had effected his junction with the patriots, there is every moral probability that this event would have occurred. Murmurings and desertions were becoming so common among the Spanish troops, particularly in the regiment of Saragossa, that the government was in the greatest state of alarm. Its existence actually depended on arresting the progress of Mina towards the middle provinces; and thus, on the co-operation of Torres and his party with Mina, depended the fate of the royal government in Mexico.

It will likewise be obvious to the reader, how different would have been Mina's situation, had he arrived twelve, or even nine months earlier on the Mexican coast, and formed a junction with such commanders as Victoria and Teran, instead of the jealous and depraved Torres. Then indeed would the hero of Navarre have gained new laurels, and the cause of liberty been triumphant. But let us pursue the train of events, in the order they occurred, subsequent to the arrival of Mina at fort Sombrero.

CHAPTER VI.

Action of San Juan de los Llanos—Capture of the Faral—Interview at Sombrero, between general Mina and some of the Revolutionary Chiefs—Overture by Mina for an exchange of prisoners—Events in Sombrero.

THE officers and soldiers of Mina's little army, on entering fort Sombrero, looked forward to enjoy a few days of repose, but the enterprising general could not remain inactive, while any occasion offered to annoy his enemy. On the 28th, information was received that a movement was made in the direction of the fort, by a body of seven hundred of the enemy, under the command of *colonel Don Felipe Castañon*, and that he was in the town of San Felipe, distant from Sombrero, east north east about thirteen leagues.

Castañon, from his activity in surprising parties of the patriots, and the enormities he committed, had rendered himself conspicuous. His fidelity had been rewarded by his government, by appointing him to the command of this division, and granting to him as a peculiar mark of confidence, liberty to act as his discretion dictated. He was allowed to move in any direction, and to enter into any province he chose, with his force, which was styled a flying division. It consisted of three hundred excellent cavalry, and four hundred infantry. His movements were rapid, secret, and generally made under cover of the night. He kept the whole country in the Baxio in perpetual alarm. He had been invariably victorious, and his name had excited such terror, that the patriots, at length, could not be brought to face him; each individual, as well the peasant as the soldier, when his name was mentioned, and they supposed he was near, thought only of making his escape.

It had latterly been the practice with the royalist commanders, in virtue of orders from the viceroy Apodaca, not to put to death, or molest the country people within the jurisdiction

of the patriots, unless they were actually taken in arms. This order was in general attended to, except some occasional acts of plunder, but Castañon most wantonly disobeyed it with regard to every individual, that came within his merciless grasp. The Gazette of Mexico teemed with his despatches, in which, after enumerating his savage acts, he invariably wound up by informing the viceroy, that the prisoners should be shot. The aged and infirm, women and children, were alike the victims of his sanguinary and vindictive spirit, so that as he advanced, every one fled to the mountains, or retired to secret retreats in the ravines, to avoid his fury. Meeting with no opposition, in the most merciless manner he murdered and robbed the unhappy peasantry, wherever they were found, and desolated every place through which he passed.

Mina, on the intelligence of his approach, rejoiced in the opportunity which offered of enabling him to attempt checking the strides of this ferocious royalist, and accordingly, on the evening of the 28th, marched to meet him with the effective force of the division, about two hundred strong, accompanied by Don Pedro Moreno, with a detachment of fifty infantry and eighty lancers, under *Don Encarnacion Ortiz.* The division continued its march till midnight, when, on reaching the ruins of an hacienda, they were joined by some patriot infantry, which increased the party to nearly four hundred men. At three in the morning, the division halted, about six leagues from San Felipe. Morning presented to view the comrades who had joined during the march. They were a motley group, that merely swelled the numerical force, without bringing an addition of strength. Over their shoulders was thrown a tattered blanket, which, with a pair of drawers, constituted their only clothing. Their muskets were generally rusty, without bayonets, locks out of repair, and many without flints. The men were unaccustomed to even the semblance of discipline, for they had lived at their own houses, scattered over several leagues of country, and had been suddenly called together for the present expedition. Such was the allied infantry; but it must not be inferred, that the lancers under Ortiz were of a similar description.

The patriots invariably pay great attention to, and take great pride in their cavalry. The lancers of Ortiz were mounted on fine horses, each man carrying either a lance or carabine, with pistols or a sword, and although they had no uniform, and were clothed in the same grotesque manner we have described on a former occasion, yet they were a hardy, fine looking set of men, full of animation and courage. Wo be to the broken ranks of an enemy, when pierced by such men as composed the cavalry of Ortiz.

At seven o'clock next morning the troops were in motion. After advancing about a league, the enemy were discovered approaching by the same road, which lay through a beautiful undulating plain, on the lands of the hacienda of *San Juan de los Llanos*, distant from the town of San Felipe five leagues. The scene of action was near the ruins of that hacienda.

Mina ordered the division to retire behind a rising ground, and there made his dispositions with his usual promptitude and skill. The Guard of Honour, regiment of the Union, and the infantry of Sombrero, forming a column of ninety men, of whom forty-five were citizens of the United States, were placed under the command of colonel Young. The first regiment of the line and the patriot infantry formed another column of one hundred and ten men, under colonel Marques, commander of the former regiment. The cavalry of the division, ninety strong, were commanded by major Maylefer; the lancers were headed by Don Encarnacion Ortiz; and to these may be added the armed servants.

The enemy having taken up his position, Mina advanced alone to within musket shot of their line to reconnoitre. His dress, and the fine appearance of his horse, soon attracted the notice of the enemy's infantry, who made a general discharge at him, but fortunately without effect. Mina's division were highly delighted with this display of his intrepidity, although many of his officers regreted to see him thus expose his person.

Having, however, accomplished his object, he returned among his troops, and gave orders to advance briskly to the attack. Colonel Young, at the head of his column, moved up

rapidly under a heavy fire of grape and musketry, poured into their infantry one volley, and then gallantly made a charge with the bayonet. Major Maylefer, at the same moment, falling, sword in hand, at the head of his cavalry, on that of the enemy, the whole gave way. The lancers, the instant they perceived the enemy in disorder, dashed furiously among them; the rout became general, and the victory was complete.

Three hundred and thirty-nine were counted slain on the field, and *two hundred and twenty* were taken prisoners. About *one hundred and fifty* of the best mounted cavalry made their escape.

Among the slain was a colonel Ordoñez, and several other distinguished officers. The implacable enemy of the patriots, *Castañon*, received a mortal wound, of which he expired, after riding about five leagues from the scene of action. The cavalry pursued the enemy about two leagues, increasing their loss.

The gallantry displayed by colonel Young in this action, and the ardour of his troops, set an example which was followed by all the rest of the division, and in fact, not more than eight minutes elapsed from the time Mina gave the order to advance, till the enemy were in full retreat. Mina's loss was *eight killed*, and *nine wounded*, but among the former was the brave and able officer *major Maylefer*. The loss of this man almost counterbalanced the victory. The major was a Swiss, and had been an officer of dragoons in the French army; he had served in Spain, and exclusive of his military talents, he was respected by the troops for his indefatigable attention to his duties.

There fell into Mina's hands, the result of this action, *one brass field piece* and *a mountain gun*, *five hundred muskets*, a greater part of which were of *British fabric*, a large quantity of *accoutrements*, and *all the ammunition and baggage*.

It is worthy of remark, that the enemy, during this action, fired *dollars* from their artillery. We presume this arose from their being deficient in grape shot, for most certainly the state of the government revenue could not well afford such an extravagant mode of warfare. Be this as it may, many of Mi-

na's soldiers were highly pleased with collecting this new species of grape shot.

Mina returned to his encampment of the preceding night, amidst the congratulations of his soldiers; marched the next morning, and arrived at Sombrero the same evening. A discharge of artillery, announced to the royalists of the Villa de Leon, that a heavy disaster had befallen their cause.

From the republican press of Jauxilla, the news was spread over the plains of the Baxio; and the country held by the patriots. The death of Castañon excited universal joy amongst all classes of people: every demonstration was given of the warm feelings of the inhabitants in favour of the patriotic cause. The royalists had the mortification to see illuminations, and hear the discharge of cannon in every direction around them, up to their very walls. The churches resounded with Te Deum. From town to town, the praises of Mina were echoed. The blessings of heaven were implored upon his head, by the widows and orphans of the victims of Castañon. Old and young, from Sombrero to the environs of the city of Mexico, and from San Luis Potosi to Zacatula, were chaunting hymns in honour of their deliverer.

The royalists now began to have stronger grounds of uneasiness. They beheld Mina's popularity daily augmenting; they saw their finest troops cut up in detail, by inferior numbers. They knew that the population of the country were ready to welcome him with open arms, in case he should advance towards Mexico with any respectable force, capable of giving efficient personal protection. They were aware that Mina's victories would excite a spirit of disaffection, which had already began to manifest itself in the royal ranks, and that every battle he gained, tended to weaken the tie which had hitherto existed between the royalists and the government.

This was the critical moment, when it may be truly said, the destinies of the Mexican nation, were in the hands of Mina. Had *Padre Torres* and the other revolutionary chiefs, actuated by a genuine love of country, and devoted to its interests and independence, magnanimously come forward and thrown under Mina's direction the men and resources which

they then had at their disposal, the standard of the revolution would now have waved over the walls of Mexico, and its freedom been established. But so far were Torres and his satellites from adopting this important and necessary step, that they began to thwart all his measures, and eventually to render all his exertions abortive.

After a few days' rest at Sombrero, the general, accompanied by Don Pedro Moreno, marched with the division and a body of lancers, in all three hundred strong, for the purpose of reducing the highly important *hacienda del Jaral*, twenty leagues north from Guanaxuato. As this is one of the most extensive and valuable haciendas in the kingdom of Mexico, it may not be uninteresting to give some account of it.

The owner of this famous hacienda is a Creole, named *Don Juan de Moncada*. From the hacienda he takes the title of Marques. Previous to the revolution, he was considered among the richest of the landed proprietaries of Mexico, and in the year 1810 actually possessed in his own mansion six millions of dollars. The rent he derived from his estates; the revenues he drew from cattle, and horses, which latter are the finest in the kingdom, and from his own culture of wheat, corn, and the article of *chile*, (*capsicum*,) were immense. Some idea may be formed of his income, when we state that he received from the cultivation of chile alone, upwards of twenty-five thousand dollars annually. The great quantities of this pungent vegetable, which is grown in almost every part of Mexico, strikes a stranger with astonishment. In the districts where the soil is best adapted to its culture, we behold enormous collections of it in all the magazines. For all culinary purposes, this vegetable is as essential to the Mexican, as salt is to the European, and indeed more so, because a Mexican would rather go without bread, than lack chile with his meat. At the table of the rich and poor, it constitutes an article of luxury as well as necessity. Both in its green and dried state, the quantity consumed is incredible. When mashed, and mixed with a little water, it is the universal sauce or seasoning on the tables of the great; whilst with the poor, it forms a component part of their diet. More than *one third* of the

Mexican population, live throughout the year on *tortillas* and chile; which last is spread on their tortillas, as butter is with us, though much thicker. On days of festivity, these poor people have an occasional change of diet, by the addition of a few eggs, or a little broth, (caldo,) but they never relinquish the use of their favourite chile. A stranger, in passing through the country, has great difficulty for the first few months to bear with the food prepared with chile, but after his palate becomes accustomed to its stimulus, it ceases to excoriate, and he generally gets as fond of it as the Indians and Creoles.

On the vast estates of the marques of Jaral, extending to *above two hundred miles in length*, the miserable labourers exist, as is customary throughout Mexico, almost entirely on tortillas and chile. No part of the earth exhibits such striking, and such monstrous contrasts of wealth and misery, as well in the country as in the cities, as Mexico. We behold the proprietor of a hacienda, decked in a style of the most costly, but awkward grandeur. He has on a pair of country made boots, which cost from fifty to a hundred dollars; large spurs inlaid with gold and silver; a superb horse, with a bridle and saddle which cost from a hundred and fifty to three hundred dollars; a cloak or mangas richly embroidered, and full of gold or silver buttons, laces, and fringe. He lives in a spacious house, within whose walls every luxury is to be found that the country affords; but when he sallies forth, he is lost amidst a group of half naked, badly fed wretches, whose only dress is sheep skins if in the country, and in a town their shoulders are covered by an old blanket or a sheet, serving them for a partial covering by day, and a bed at night. No species of attention is ever paid by the lord of the soil, to the comfort or wants of his tenants or vassals, and a more wretched race of cultivators does not exist under the canopy of heaven, than the Indian labourers on these estates, and in the mining districts. Twenty-five cents, or two reals, is the daily pittance of a labourer; out of this, he has to clothe and feed himself and family, and has to pay the government and parochial extortions. No wonder, therefore, that he rarely tastes

meat. In fact, the situation of a Georgia field negro is superior, notwithstanding all the royal writers say to the contrary.

In the cities, the poorer classes are still more wretched and numerous, than in the country. In some places, they are called *Guachinangos*, in others, *Zaragates*, *Leperos*, and *Pelados*. In the city of Mexico, that class of miserable beings is computed at *thirty thousand*, or about *one fourth* of the population. Some of them display great ingenuity, and evince what might be made of them if placed under other circumstances. They work beautifully in wax, gold and silver ornaments, in painting and sculpture, and in making boxes of beads: they know not the value of their labours. We have seen them, when impelled by hunger, or anxious to obtain a little money to spend on days of festivity, part with pieces of exquisite workmanship, on which they had expended weeks of labour, for a few reals.

The majority of these wretches live in idleness, and support themselves by gaming, which, of course, brings in its train all the other vices. Nothing can more forcibly depict, not merely a defective police, but the dreadful features of the Spanish government, than the existence of so much misery in a country possessing the finest soil and climate on earth, and where the actual population is not *one thousandth part* equal to the physical resources of this beautiful section of the American continent.

The magnificent edifices of the city of Mexico, the personal splendour which surrounds the viceroy and all the officers of government, the costly temples for divine worship, the gorgeous exhibitions in religious processions, contrasted with the gloomy visages and wretched appearance of the Mexican poor, mark the reign of extortion, self-aggrandizement, superstition and ignorance. But let us return to the marques of Jaral—he had acted a conspicuous part in the revolution, by a determined opposition to the patriots, and by his generous gifts to the king: he had raised the regiment of dragoons which bears his name, of which he was appointed colonel. The demands of his own party, and the occasional incursions of the patriots,

had seriously diminished his revenue, but he was still possessed of several millions, and was supposed to have a large amount of specie, buried in various places. This practice of burying money has become frequent since the revolution, as well among the patriots as royalists, many of them not disclosing the secret until at the point of death. Large sums remain yet interred, the owners of which have been unexpectedly cut off by the contending parties, and rather than disclose where it was hid, have allowed it to be lost to circulation. Afraid to bury too much money about their edifices, they have generally conveyed their treasures to unfrequented parts of the mountains, so that it rarely happens that they again come to light. Instances, however, have occurred of this, which is not inaptly styled by the Americans "*a resurrection.*"

The hacienda of Jaral, as we have before stated, was of great extent: on it was a large mansion house, and several valuable and handsome buildings, combining in itself every necessary accommodation of dwelling houses, stores, &c. &c. There were likewise extensive granaries, a neat church, and some comfortable edifices belonging to the marques's principal dependants, besides a great number of peasants' houses.

The Jaral, like all important haciendas belonging to the royalists, was fortified and garrisoned at the expense of the proprietor. It was walled in and surrounded by a ditch. As the patriots in its vicinity had for some time past been diminishing in number and enterprise, no danger of an attack was apprehended, particularly from Mina, whose distance the marques considered in itself a sufficient protection, presuming it would be impossible for him to approach the hacienda through the dependants, which surrounded it for several miles, without his receiving timely information. Under these impressions, the marques and his family were living there, as he supposed, in perfect security. The soldiery who had escaped the disaster of San Juan de los Llanos, were then quartered in the place, and with its garrison, the military force of the Jaral was upwards of three hundred men and three pieces of artillery.

In Mina's enterprise against this hacienda, he exhibited his peculiar talent for guerilla expeditions. Although the road lay through the thickly settled domains of the marques, for two or three hours of the second day's march from the fort, yet such was the good management and judgment of Mina, that his advance arrived within sight of the hacienda, before the marques was advised of his approach; and if colonel Noboa, who had the command of the advance, had strictly obeyed Mina's orders, the marques and the garrison would have been taken. They however had just time to save themselves by a precipitate flight. The remains of Castañon's division felt no inclination to measure their strength again with Mina, concluding it safest to accompany the marques, with whom they fled to San Luis Potosi. It was dark when the division entered the hacienda. Mina, who was ignorant of the flight of the enemy, was surprised at meeting with no resistance, and conceived it probable that the enemy were in ambuscade. Arriving, however, at the mansion, he was met by the priest at the porch, welcoming his arrival at the Jaral, and informing him of the sudden flight of the marques, presenting, at the same time, the respectful compliments of the latter, with a request that the general would consider the hacienda and all it contained at his service, but that the marques hoped the general would spare the buildings.

Mina immediately issued orders to his troops to respect private property, and to refrain from ill-treating the inhabitants. The latter were likewise made acquainted with these orders, and were requested, in case of any violation of them, to give information at head-quarters, that the perpetrators might receive merited punishment.

Early next morning, an inquiry was made to ascertain where the treasures were buried. One of the marques's servants gave information, that a quantity of specie was concealed under the pavement of a small room adjoining the kitchen. After digging a considerable depth, a shovel of earth, mixed with loose dollars, was thrown up. The excavation was continued about three hours, during which time the general distributed

some dollars among the troops, who, on hearing the news, had flocked to the premises to witness so novel a sight.

In the room where the excavation was going on, Don Pedro Moreno, Don Encarnacion Ortiz, three of Mina's staff, and the labourers, were the only persons admitted, sentinels being placed at the door to prevent the entrance of others. After the operation was ended, an estimate was made by the treasurer of the amount, at *one hundred and forty thousand dollars*. It was said that Don Pedro, and some other of the chiefs, had privately pocketed some *doubloons*, which it is highly probable might have been the fact; these were, of course, not included in the estimate.

At an angle of the marques's mansion was a store, stocked with articles for the use of the hacienda. In the front it contained dry goods, of British and native manufacture, and in the rear was a magazine of sugar, cocoa, brandies, and other articles. As the dry goods were essentially necessary for the troops, they were distributed; but so small was the quantity, that the share, to those who obtained any, was trifling, and many did not receive any thing. The brandies were particularly withheld, and not an article in the back store was moved from its place. The dry goods, the specie, and a few horses and oxen, were all that were taken. The money was put into wagons, and the same evening the division took up the line of march on its return.

During the day, a deserter came in from San Luis Potosi, and reported, that the marques on his arrival there, not considering himself in safety, had passed through the city, and that the inhabitants were anxiously waiting for the arrival of Mina, ready to receive him with open arms. We cannot vouch for the fact, but, from subsequent information, we know that the people of San Luis were at that time ripe for a revolt.

The progress of the division was so slow, owing to the heavy, clumsy nature of the wagons, that the next day a number of asses was procured from San Felipe and its environs, and after the specie was removed to them, the wagons and the oxen, with the exception of ten, were sent back to the Jaral, accompanied by Mina's best respects to the marques, and that

at some future day he would do himself the honour again to visit the hacienda.

The next evening, Mina received intelligence that some troops were in a rancho, three leagues distant from the fort, where he had intended to halt that night. The troops in question were supposed to belong to the enemy. A reconnoitring party was despatched to ascertain the fact, but it returned with the information that they were friends. Previous to reaching the rancho, it became very dark and rainy, rendering it difficult to keep the asses in droves; and on arriving at the rancho, two or three of the bags of specie were missing. It was afterwards known, that some of the guard who had charge of this treasure, taking advantage of the obscurity of the night, had appropriated a few thousand dollars to their own use.

At the rancho, the general met colonel Don Miguel Borja, the commandant of the district of the hacienda de Burras, who informed him that his *excellency* general Torres, with doctor Don José San Martin, and other distinguished patriots, were then at Sombrero, where they had come to pay their respects to and congratulate the general. Mina accordingly set off early next morning, to meet these republican chiefs, and the division, with its prize, entered the fort in the course of the forenoon, under a salute of artillery, whose unwelcome echoes again announced to the vassals of Ferdinand VII. in Leon, some reverse of their arms.

The money was now counted into the military chest, and proved to be one hundred and seven thousand dollars, in place of one hundred and forty thousand, at which it had been previously estimated.

The Spanish government has stated, (no doubt according to the representations of the marques,) that the property of which the Jaral was robbed, amounted to three hundred and six thousand four hundred dollars, viz.—

In milled money, - - - - -	$ 150,000	
Provincial money, - - -	33,300	
Bars of silver and clothes, -	86,000	
Goods taken out of the stores,	30,000	
Carried forward,	———	$ 299,300

Brought forward,		$ 299,300
In Indian corn, - - - - - - $	5,000	
150 oxen, at $ 14 per head,	2,100	
		7,100
		$ 306,400

It is possible that the marques may have lost property to that amount, but we positively assert that no such value was captured, and that two of the items therein stated, are altogether false. If the marques has really made such a statement to his government, he has not only violated veracity, but acted most ungenerously towards Mina. Supposing Don Pedro Moreno, or any other of the patriot chiefs, had entered the Jaral as victors, what would have been the consequences, according to the uniform practice of the patriots and royalists on such occasions? We ask the marques, would private property have been respected; or the disorders of the soldiers restrained? Would they not have sacked the hacienda, as well as the mansion and dwellings of the dependants? Would not the stores and granaries have been emptied, and all the cattle within their reach have been driven off? And after committing those acts, would they not have closed the scene, by wrapping in flames the hacienda, and all that could not be carried off? And is it not likewise probable, that even some of the dependants of the marques would have lost their lives?

To the honour of Mina, we once more repeat, that he was averse to all scenes of rapine or cruelty. Mercy marked every step of his progress, and he invariably treated an illiberal enemy with a generosity they little deserved, and never in any one instance did he distress or maltreat the victims that fell into his power.

We admit the *possibility* of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars being the amount of the specie, but as before stated, there was only one hundred and seven thousand dollars received into the chest; the amount distributed among the troops, and what was stolen by the guard, with the doubloons taken

by the patriot chiefs, may have amounted to forty-three thousand dollars; but we consider it doubtful.

The item of provincial money in his account, is not correct, nor was a single bar of silver taken. We know from the impression of the money, that it had been buried since 1810 or 1811; a time when provincial money was unknown. The charge of taking clothes is likewise totally false; the troops having been forbid to enter the house, could have had no chance to pilfer. The head-quarters were in the mansion of the marques, to which only the staff and superior officers had access. The table was served in plate belonging to the marques, the value of which was very considerable, and yet the whole of it was respected. Is any thing more unlikely then, than that clothes should be taken in preference to plate? The fact is, not an article of the marques's wardrobe was touched, except a richly embroidered pair of country boots, which, with a saddle, were presented to Ortiz. A gold mounted sword and a chacot were likewise given to an officer.

The whole of the dry goods in the store, might possibly be valued at thirty thousand dollars; but the portion distributed among the troops, did not amount to a third of that sum.

Neither sugar, cocoa, nor any article in the back store, was touched, except a small fifteen gallon cask of tolerably good sherry wine, which was drank among some of the officers in toasting the health of the marques, and success to the cause of Mexican independence.

The item of five thousand dollars for corn, is another palpable misstatement. The consumption in two days would not have reached the value of one hundred dollars, and there was not a single fanega taken off. As to the charge for oxen, it is likewise ridiculous, for as we have before observed, there were only ten taken away.

We conceive it more than probable, that the dependants of the marques, taking advantage of circumstances, may have robbed their master, conceiving that every thing missing in the hacienda, would be laid to the incursion of Mina, but we considered it due to the reputation of the general to be thus

particular, in repelling the insidious and false attacks on his character, made in the Gazette of Mexico, relating to the affair of the Jaral.

The exaggerations and falsehoods which have been published in that famous Gazette, have constituted one of the main springs in the machinery of the government, and with great propriety may they exult in having the absolute control of the press, for to that circumstance more than any other cause may be attributed the success of the royalists, arising from the ignorance of the patriots, or rather the false statements that were spread among them by the royalist Gazette, from the commencement of the revolution down to the present day.

The interview at Sombrero, between the general and the republican chiefs, before named, appeared to bear the features of sincerity. We have no doubt, with the exception of Padre Torres, every other individual among Mina's visiters, was not only sincerely disposed to co-operate with him, but that their professions of attachment to him, and gratitude for the important services he had rendered the cause of independence, really sprung from their hearts.

Mina's victories, his enterprise, his pleasing address, his renown, and fast-spreading popularity, were all calculated to awaken the diabolical passions, which ruled the breast of the envious Torres. He viewed the hero of Navarre as an unwelcome intruder, that would soon destroy the ephemeral authority he then exercised. He saw in Mina an energy of character, and a superiority of talent, that would soon raise him to an exalted rank among the Mexicans, and that he himself would speedily be supplanted in the seat of power. These anticipations, blended with innate depravity, made him view the noble-minded Mina with a rancorous eye, and he no doubt at once secretly resolved to destroy him; indeed, he had scarcely sufficient art or prudence to conceal the envy rankling in his bosom.

The Padre said, that in consideration of the military talents and fame of Mina, he had no objections to place himself under his orders, but, at the same time, he begged him to remember, that it was an act of condescension, because he (the

Padre) was his superior in rank; when, however, the interests of the republic required it, he was proud of having an opportunity to show his devotion to the public good, by acting under so experienced a military chief. The *manner* in which these sentiments were delivered, did not escape the penetration of colonel Young, who was present, and who had attentively examined the countenance of the Padre during the whole interview.

Mina stated, to the leading republican chiefs, his perfect obedience and devotion to their government, and with his characteristic frankness laid open to them his motives for having espoused the cause of American emancipation. He stated his firm resolution to perish or succeed in it; he unfolded all his plans; placed before their eyes their situation; his views of the method to be pursued in the future warfare; and he endeavoured to convince them of the support which would be cheerfully afforded to the cause by his external friends; he pointed out to them the cardinal value of a warm co-operation, and conjured them as men and as Mexicans, assertors of their country's liberty, to unite with him in heart and hand against the common enemy of their land. He expressed his firm conviction, that with proper exertions within, and the support which would, in that case, be rendered from abroad, the cause of liberty could not fail of being crowned with success.

Never did the character of Mina appear to higher advantage, than when uttering these pure and patriotic sentiments. The chiefs of the republic, as well as his own officers, who were present, listened to him with admiration, and every heart seemed to respond with gratitude to the hero. Even Padre Torres, at the time, seemed anxious to convince Mina of his cordial and sincere friendship. Taking him by the hand, he exclaimed, "I have six thousand men to place under your orders." "If that is the case," replied the general, "then will I march direct upon the capital of Mexico."

After the interview was closed, and the parties had separated, colonel Young observed to one of his comrades, "I think we may rely on the sincerity of all the patriot chiefs, except

that Padre; him I do not like; envy is stamped on his countenance; we must beware of him; he will deceive us; depend upon it, he is inimical to our gallant chief." Alas! these prophetic hints were too soon verified by the conduct of Torres.

The head-quarters of Torres at Remedios, were in the midst of a country extremely productive of grain of every description. The inhabitants, almost without exception, were devoted to the patriotic cause, and were ever ready and able to furnish any supplies of provisions required by Torres.

The country round the base of Sombrero, had been more or less laid waste, and was thinly cultivated; and as Mina intended to establish his head-quarters at this fort, until he could raise and equip a considerable body of troops, he was of course obliged to depend on the good management and promises of Torres, to supply him with all the necessary provisions. But in order not to put Torres to any inconvenience, and to obtain supplies with celerity, he handed over to him *eight thousand dollars*, to be appropriated for the immediate victualling of Sombrero; which Torres promised to effect in a few days. It was now resolved among the chiefs, that the most active measures should be adopted to bring into the field, with every possible despatch, a well trained army. Torres assured Mina he might rest perfectly easy; that it should soon be accomplished, as he could raise hosts of recruits from the pueblos and ranchos under his command; and he likewise further stated, that himself and subalterns had a number of stand of muskets which they had buried.

To the frank and unsuspecting mind of Mina, all this looked well; he did not even dream that this man could deliberately resolve on deceiving him, and ruining the cause they had both espoused. He flattered himself, that a more intimate acquaintance with each other's views, would strengthen their friendship; and he resolved to do every thing in his power to show Torres the high confidence he reposed in him. Accordingly, colonel Noboa was ordered to proceed to Remedios, and there, under the eye, and with the co-operation of Torres, to organize and discipline the troops about to be raised.

After a few days had been spent at Sombrero, in forming the future plan of operations, Torres, with his staff, the governors, &c. accompanied by colonel Noboa and the eight thousand dollars, returned to Los Remedios.

Mina opened a correspondence with the Spanish commandant of the town of Lagos, for the purpose of effecting the release of lieutenant Porter, who had (as we have previously stated) been made prisoner, the night before the junction with the patriots. Mina offered to give in exchange for his officer, *any number* of the prisoners he then held. A very polite letter was received from the commandant, (whose name we regret has escaped us,) in which he expressed his grief at the unnatural course of the warfare, and lamented his inability to determine on the exchange without consulting his superior officer, to whom he had immediately transmitted the proposal. A few days afterwards a letter was received, whose purport was, that the commander in chief of the province (we presume Don José de la Cruz) had not only refused to liberate Mina's officer on any conditions, but expressly prohibited the commandant of Lagos from holding any communication whatever with a *rebel*. Thus was Mina's efforts to save his officer rendered abortive, and the Spanish government, rather than deliver up one man, conformably to the usages of civilized warfare and the principles of humanity, preferred risking the sacrifice of *two hundred Spanish prisoners*, then in Mina's hands, and which they had strong reasons to suppose would be shot. When the Spanish prisoners were informed of the cruel and impolitic answer of the commandant general, they uttered execrations against him, as well as their barbarous government. If these prisoners had been in the power of Padre Torres, he would without hesitation have shot the whole of them; and those that are now living, must acknowledge that they owe their existence entirely to the generosity of Mina.

We have since understood that lieutenant Porter was sent to *San Blas*, from whence he was deported to a presidio at *Manilla*, there to labour on the fortifications, or perhaps to perish in the dungeons of the fortress—the usual fate of those sent to that place.

The conduct of Mina towards his prisoners exhibits traits of policy and humanity, which merit particular notice. Those that were taken in the affair of *San Juan de los Llanos*, had been treated with every possible kindness, and the wounded among them met with the unremitted exertions of the surgeons. This conduct of the general was totally unexpected on the part of the royalist troops, and filled them equally with astonishment and gratitude. The simple act of having removed some of the wounded from the field of Peotillos, produced most important results among the royalists in favour of Mina, particularly among the European troops; his praise resounded through their ranks, and they now saw, that while opposing Mina, they were not combating for life, as had hitherto been the case; and if the fortune of war should throw them into his hands, they would be treated as men and as soldiers. We subsequently learned from several deserters, that the royalist troops made Mina frequently the theme of their conversation, and many of them had determined, that when they should again come in contact with his division, they would only make a show of fighting, and seize the first occasion to join his standard. The prisoners taken at the affair of San Juan de los Llanos had frequently expressed a desire to be embodied in Mina's division. He was now anxious to augment his strength by every possible means, and as the money taken at the Jaral gave him the means of equipment, he addressed the prisoners in an appropriate manner, offering to receive all who would voluntarily enrol themselves under his banners; at the same time, generously declaring, that all who did not feel perfectly disposed to do their duty as soldiers of the republic, should be furnished with passports to return to their homes, and have money to pay their expenses. With a burst of joy and gratitude they accepted Mina's offer, and with the exception of four or five persons, all the rest agreed to join him, and accordingly were sworn in, and enrolled with the first regiment. These were an acquisition of high importance: recruits also were flocking to Sombrero from various parts of the country, so that Mina now saw a prospect opening of soon being

enabled to raise a fine regiment of infantry, provided the enemy would only continue inactive for a few weeks longer.

Some of the most experienced officers of the Guard of Honour were transferred to the first regiment, and colonel Young received the appointment of inspector general of the province. The administration of the division was new modelled and established; a proportion of pay was given to the troops; satisfaction reigned among them; every hour augmented their confidence towards their brave chief; and every thing was conducted with order and alacrity. Agents were despatched, with ample funds, to Queretaro, to Mexico, and to many of the manufacturing towns, to purchase cloths, linens, and necessaries for the soldiers and officers. In the Villa de Leon, contracts were made with the royalists to supply shoes and hats; an arsenal was erected in the fort. The taylors of the division, and many of the natives, were employed in making uniforms; an armoury, under the direction of an officer of the Guard of Honour, was established, and in fact, such dispositions were made as denoted not merely the talent and foresight of the general, but the zeal and good conduct of his officers and soldiers.

From the Villa de Leon and the country adjacent, every article of comfort, and even of luxury was supplied, and as the division was flush with cash, they soon had a market in the fort, equal, perhaps superior to that of any of the royal towns in the plains.

On the summit of a barren rock, and in the zenith of enjoyment, the troops were indulging in visions of future glory. Their past exertions and successes operated as a stimulus to gather fresh laurels, and they looked forward with anxiety to the day, when the preparations they were making would allow them to commence their march for the Mexican capital.

The general satisfaction that pervaded Mina's officers and soldiers, was interrupted by the meanness and avarice of Don Pedro Moreno, commandant of the fort. This unprincipled individual bent all his thoughts and actions to the amassing of money.

A great proportion of the prize money taken at Pinos, was in the provincial coin of Zacatecas; which had been made in that city for circulation, when the communication was cut off between the northern and southern provinces. The metal was particularly pure, but since the communication had been opened, as the coin was badly stamped, it would only pass in the large cities, where its real value was known. This provincial money was a speculation too alluring to escape the notice of the avaricious Don Pedro, whose principal aim, like that of almost every patriot chief under the command of Torres, was to get money, no matter by what means.

He accordingly published a proclamation, declaring that Zacatecas dollars should only be current at four reals (fifty cents.) This affected, in a most tender point, those soldiers who held that kind of prize money. It was soon discovered that Don Pedro, who had the greatest capital in the fort, purchased them in at the depreciation before mentioned, and sent them to Leon or Lagos, where he received full value for them; thus making fifty per cent out of the soldiers. It was likewise ascertained, that the Don and his officers, taking advantage of the ignorance of the customs and language of their auxiliaries, monopolized in the market many essential articles, and resold them to the troops at double what they had cost.

This disgraceful business was communicated to Mina, but as he did not wish to interfere with the local regulations of the fort, of which Moreno was the commandant, and as he did not think it a proper time to enter into a dispute with him, he appeared to take little notice of the transaction.

It will no doubt appear strange to the reader, that the patriots could procure from the royal towns supplies with such facility, but it is explained as follows.

The royalists, as well as the patriots, were alive to self-interest; the former knew, that unless they kept open a traffic with the latter, the inhabitants of the towns would be exposed to perish by famine. The patriots held under control the peasantry and their productions; they constantly hovered round the towns; scoured, in small parties, every foot-path and by-road; and were continually on the alert. The enemy

could only sally out in strong divisions; they were afraid to separate in pursuit of the insurgents; while the latter, on the approach of a division, retired from the high roads a short distance, and as soon as the royalists were out of sight, or returned within the walls of the towns, again came down to their work of annoyance. By following this species of warfare, they prevented any thing from entering a royalist town, except by a passport. The patriot and royalist commanders found it to their interests to grant these passports. The latter, by this means, received provisions; the former, luxuries. A reciprocal traffic was thus established; both parties charging heavy duties on what went into, as well as what came out of the towns. The advantages, however, which accrued to the royalists by this commerce, were far greater than to the opposite party. The royalists, by receiving provisions, were enabled to maintain their positions, which was the primary point. Their commerce prospered. It augmented, though in a small ratio, the revenue. They drew from the patriots their specie; and in short, it tended to demoralize the patriots, and materially to accelerate their subjugation. The patriots, on the other hand, received some dry goods and luxuries which were by no means essential; and the revenue derived from this impolitic traffic, in the latter stages of the revolution, instead of being applied to the good of their country, flowed into the pockets of the commandants and their satellites.

Frequently the patriots had it in their power to literally starve out the royalists. Some patriotic commanders occasionally determined on this plan, but their efforts were unavailing, for want of union among the other commanders; for, while one was prohibiting provisions from entering a royal town, another was granting passports for their entrance into some other place.

The city of Valladolid was at one time, during the revolution, reduced to the last extremity, the patriots having prohibited all supplies from going into the city. Even the article of charcoal had become so scarce, that females of fortune used to ride in their coaches to the environs of Valladolid, for the purpose of meeting such daring fellows as had the good

fortune to escape the vigilance of the patriots, and to bring in a few bushels of charcoal. Disputes would arise about the distribution of the article, and when a person obtained half a bushel, by entreaty or purchase, it was considered a great piece of good fortune. The republican commander of the district at last, however, wanted money, and obtained it by granting licenses. The city was supplied with provisions, and relieved from distress.

In latter days, this kind of trade between the contending parties became so general and systematic, that there was scarcely a royal or patriot chief, who did not amass more or less wealth from these licenses. This is the only mild trait that has been discernible in the course of the revolution; but as it springs from the detestable principle of avarice, it must not be considered as a social intercourse, for the very same people, who thus reciprocally trafficked, were at the same time shooting their respective prisoners in cold blood, and committing towards each other the most savage cruelties.

General Teran, whom we have before noticed for his extraordinary talents, had, in the year 1816, proposed a plan to Victoria and Osourno, for getting possession of the city of Vera Cruz, by marching with their joint forces, and taking up such positions as would have effectually cut off supplies from entering into that city. He knew that such was the improvidence of the Spanish government, that they had no stores of provisions in reserve in that city, and that a vast population depended for its daily subsistence on an intercourse with the country; of course, if the latter had been suddenly cut off, the surrender of the city was inevitable, because they could not obtain external succours by water, in time to have remedied the evil.

We have been informed, by intelligent royalists of that city, and from our personal knowledge of its dependent condition on the score of provisions, we know it to be a fact, that if Teran's plans had been pursued, the place would have surrendered in fifteen or twenty days, more especially as at that time the great body of the inhabitants (European Spaniards and officers of government excepted) were ripe for a revolt,

the moment that a respectable division of the patriots should approach. The jealousies of Victoria and Osourno towards Teran, were the sole cause why the latter did not put his plan into execution.

We have been thus particular in stating these facts, because they serve to illustrate our former remark, that the Spanish government owes its existence at this day in Mexico, entirely to the *ignorance*, *jealousy*, *ambition*, and *venality*, of certain chiefs among the patriots, and that, had their efforts been directed by union and system, the patriots might, at any one period for nearly seven years, have established the liberty of their country.

CHAPTER VII.

Intelligence of the fall of Soto la Marina, received at Sombrero —Investissement of the fort by Arredondo—Operations during the siege—Desertion of La Sala—His base conduct —Gallant defence of the garrison—Its capitulation—The terms—Their violation—Cruel treatment experienced by the captives, in Altamira, on the road to Vera Cruz, and in the dungeons of San Juan de Ulua—Departure of some of the captives for Spain—Order of the minister of war at Madrid—Strictures on the violation of the capitulation, and on the decree of the Cortes, of the 10th of April, 1813—Violation of Miranda's capitulation at Caracas—The consequences thereof—Cruelty of the Spaniards in Puerto Cavello—Dreadful measures of retaliation adopted by general Bolivar.

WHILE Mina was making his preparations at Sombrero, he received the Gazette of Mexico, in which was announced the fall of the little fort at Soto la Marina. This was indeed painful intelligence, not only on account of the loss of some valuable officers, men, arms, and munitions of war, but because it cut him off from an external communication, so essential to the success of his operations.

The official accounts published in the Gazette, contained no more information on the subject than what the royalists thought proper to promulgate; and, as usual, it was composed of hyperbole and falsehood. Authentic information has since been obtained, of the circumstances that occurred to that garrison, subsequently to the departure of Mina for the interior.

It was a singular coincidence of events, that on the same day, and nearly at the same hour, that Mina gained the important victory of Peotillos, the garrison of Soto la Marina was forced to capitulate. The gallant defence which it made

reflects the highest honour on its garrison, and shows that the spirit of Mina had extended itself to every individual of his troops.

After Mina's departure, great exertions had been made to discipline the recruits, and to get up the stores from the bar of the river. Amongst other arrangements, a national guard was formed of the peasantry, and the command given to major Castillo. The numerical force, under the orders of major Sardá, amounted only to *one hundred and thirty-five* men.

On the 3d of June, a foraging party of twenty-five men, under the command of captain Andreas, was despatched to bring in a supply of corn. It was returning, on the 8th, with twenty-three mules, laden with provisions, when it encountered a party of *two hundred and twenty* of the enemy. The little band maintained an obstinate action for half an hour, when the whole, except three, were killed or taken prisoners. The latter were all shot, except the commander, Andreas, whose life was spared, on his promise of rendering them services. This loss was severely felt by the commander of the fort, major Sardá, as it reduced his force to one hundred and thirteen men.

The major had received information, on the 6th, of the approach of the royalists, and immediately ordered every person to work on the intrenchments. The labour, under a scorching sun, was severe and unremitting; but not a murmur was heard from any one. All were intent on preparing to withstand a siege. Even the females of the peasantry took an active part in the toil: they killed and jerked the cattle. The seamen were strenuous in their exertions to remove the stores from the beach. In the meantime, the Spanish naval squadron, recently strengthened by a brig, had twice appeared off the river, but showed no disposition to risk a landing.

On the 11th, the royalist forces made their first appearance, and occupied the rancho of San José, about a league distant. Major Sardá received information of the exact force of the enemy. They consisted of the battalion of Fernando 7°; an European regiment of infantry, *three hundred and sixty* strong;

three hundred and fifty infantry of the regiment of Fixo de Vera Cruz; *two hundred and eighty* artillerists, with *nineteen* pieces of artillery; and *twelve hundred* cavalry: the whole under the command of general Arredondo.

To oppose this formidable force, major Sardá had only *one hundred and thirteen* men; ninety-three of whom composed the garrison, the remaining twenty being occupied in attending to the preservation of the stores. Colonel Myers, of the artillery, and commissary Bianchi, had previously resigned; and captain Dagasan, a French officer, was appointed to succeed to the command of the artillery. On the fort were mounted three field pieces, two howitzers, one eleven and a half inch mortar, and three carronades. The rear of the fort, however, was open, as there had not been time to throw up the intended redoubt. Colonel Perry, whose conduct and fate we have already narrated, had marched, it appears, to the bar, and there supplied himself with arms and ammunition. Major Sardá indulged a hope that the colonel, after deliberate reflection, would have returned to his comrades; but unfortunately this expectation was disappointed. Had the fifty-three Americans, who abandoned the cause with Perry, returned to the fort, it is highly probable that the enemy would have been successfully resisted. This assertion is supported, not only by the gallantry displayed by the handful of men who defended the fort, but by the want of skill and good conduct on the part of the besiegers.

On the 12th, the enemy, from a distant battery on the opposite bank of the river, opened a fire, which they maintained until the 14th, without doing any material injury.

Captain Andreas, who had been taken prisoner, and whose life had been spared, as before stated, on condition of serving the enemy, accordingly wrote to captain *La Sala*, the senior officer of engineers, and to captain *Martenich*, of the first regiment, inviting them to desert the fort, and come over to the royalists; and, on the 13th, these two officers actually passed to the enemy. This occurrence not only excited the indignation of, but created much uneasiness among, the garrison, as La Sala was minutely acquainted with the situation of the fort, and might likewise give every information necessary for its

reduction. Major Sardá, therefore, called a council of war; and, after a short consultation, the officers crossed their swords, and swore to defend the fort to the uttermost extremity.

The village of Soto la Marina had been burned, and almost every thing cut down that was thought capable of affording shelter to the enemy; but on the right of the fort had been left a few bushes, under cover of which was stationed a party of three hundred cavalry, who attempted to drive away the cattle that were grazing near the fort. To dislodge these, twenty-six infantry, with one field piece, sallied from the fort, and in a most gallant manner attacking the enemy, put them to flight. This affair animated the men, inspired them with confidence in their own valour, and filled them with contempt for the enemy.

The garrison continued to work night and day to complete the fortification, maintaining, at the same time, a steady fire, whenever the enemy presented themselves; and, in order not to lose time, a few were employed constantly in loading muskets, while the others fired. A thousand muskets, loaded, and with fixed bayonets, were kept ready, in case of an assault.

On the night of the 14th, by the direction of the traitor La Sala, the enemy planted a battery on the right bank of the river, within musket-shot; and, at three A. M. of the 15th, they opened a tremendous fire, from twelve pieces of artillery, upon the rear of the fort. Soon after day-light, they brought up seven pieces of artillery on the left bank of the river; and thus the garrison was exposed to a cross fire, which spread destruction at every shot.

Mina had taken La Sala, with two other Italians, out of a state of mendicity, in London. The wife and family of one of them were brought to the United States at the expense of the general, who, as far as his means permitted, made provision for their support. This man and a brother were among the deserters at Port au Prince; and, not content with that act of ingratitude, he had the assurance to commence a prosecution for six months' pay. But an order from general Boyer, the now president of the republic, prevented the court from proceeding in so iniquitous a case. La Sala was then indignant at the conduct of his two friends, and expressed his

determination to follow the fortunes of the general. This apparent fidelity was not lost on Mina. La Sala was promoted to a captaincy, and he stood high in the esteem of the general; as a proof of which, he was entrusted with the arduous and honourable post of the engineer department of Soto la Marina. Under such circumstances, his desertion was an act of peculiar baseness; but his advising the enemy where to plant their cannon, so as most effectually to destroy his former comrades, and, as it appeared, his wantonly directing their fire even upon the place in which he knew the women and children took refuge, are circumstances so monstrous as to outrage the best feelings of human nature. Had it not been for the treacherous conduct of this faithless Italian, the enemy would undoubtedly have been baffled in their attempts on the fort.

The enemy, as soon as they opened the battery on the right bank, lined the river with the light infantry of the Fernando 7°, by which they succeeded in preventing the garrison from reaching the river. At sun-rise, it was perfectly calm; but the heat became most oppressive. These circumstances, combined with the dense state of the atmosphere, and the unremitting exertions of the troops, soon rendered their thirst insupportable; and, although the river was within a few paces, so heavy and destructive was the fire of the enemy, that no man, even the boldest, would venture to allay his thirst. In this situation, a Mexican heroine, seeing the men fainting at the guns, intrepidly sallied from the fort, and, amidst a shower of balls, succeeded, uninjured, in bringing a partial supply of water to the suffering soldiers.

At noon, the artillery of the fort was either altogether dismounted, or more or less disabled; and the grape-shot was nearly expended. The enemy had succeeded in making a breach in the face of the work. Their bugles, trumpets, and drums, now sounded the advance; and their columns were discovered moving up in close order to the assault. This was the critical moment for the little garrison to display all their energies; and accordingly they prepared with firmness to repulse the approaching storm, or to die in the attempt. The loaded muskets were kept in readiness; and some of the guns

were temporarily remounted, as was supposed, for the last time: these were loaded to the muzzles with musket balls, the only remaining howitzer containing upwards of nine hundred. The enemy now advanced briskly, vociferating "*Viva el Rey!*" and, presenting a formidable front, seemed determined on carrying the fort. They were suffered to approach within a hundred paces, when the garrison greeted them with shouts of "*Viva la Libertad y Mina!*" accompanied by a heavy discharge of musket balls. The enemy, unable to withstand so vigorous an attack, fell into confusion, faced about, and fled in the utmost consternation and disorder. They rallied, and again advanced in columns of attack, driving before them droves of horses, for the double purpose of covering the men from the fire of the garrison, and filling up the ditch with those that should be killed. The garrison retained their fire, as before: the enemy approached with the same apparent resolution, but were again as effectually received, and repulsed. During this assault, Arredondo narrowly escaped destruction from a cannon ball. Once more the enemy rallied, and made a third attempt, which likewise terminated in a destructive repulse.

In this manner did a mere handful of brave men, attacked in front, rear, and on the flanks, resist an overwhelming superiority of numbers. Heroic as was this defence, yet the garrison was too weak to sustain much longer a contest so unequal and unabating, without repose or refreshment; for incessant labour, and intolerable thirst, had exhausted almost every individual. The artillery was rendered nearly useless; most of the artillerists were killed; and the infantry, by incessant firing, were so bruised, that they could scarcely bring a musket to the shoulder. In this deplorable situation, the recruits became alarmed, and some of them escaped from the fort. The firing on both sides, as if by mutual consent, after the third repulse, had somewhat slackened. The slaughter which had been made among the royal troops, taught them the danger of attempting another assault on a place defended by men who had given such proofs of constancy and courage.

At half past one, a flag of truce was sent by Arredondo, demanding the surrender of the fort at discretion. He was answered that such a proposal was inadmissible; and he was even recommended to make another attempt to carry the place by assault. Major Sardá then called together the remaining recruits, and asked them if they would share the fate of the foreigners, who were determined to die, rather than submit to any dishonourable terms: "We are ready to die with you," was the reply of these high-spirited peasants. Another flag now arrived, with the offer that the lives of the garrison should be spared: the former answer was repeated. A third message was received; and, while the conference was going on, the staff-adjutant of Arredondo came up, and stated, that his general would sincerely regret to be obliged to sacrifice men who had displayed such extraordinary bravery; and that he was empowered to accede to the most honourable and liberal terms. Accordingly, after some consultation, the following articles of capitulation were drawn up, and handed to the officer:—

I. All parties composing the garrison of the fort of Soto la Marina, as well as those that are or may have been at the bar or on the river, shall be included in the present capitulation. They shall surrender themselves prisoners of war, every one receiving a treatment corresponding with his rank; and the officers shall be paroled.

II. All private property shall be respected.

III. The foreigners shall be sent to the United States, by the first opportunity. The natives of the country shall be sent to their respective homes, and their past conduct shall remain wholly unnoticed.

IV. The garrison shall march out with the honours of war, and stack their arms.

Those conditions being agreed on, the Spanish officer, in the presence of the whole garrison, declared that he was authorized by general Arredondo to accede to any terms he thought proper; and that therefore he solemnly pledged his word of honour, on behalf of his commanding officer, that the conditions of capitulation, thus placed in his hands, should be scrupulously observed. Major Sardá was well aware, that the

honour of a royalist officer, thus solemnly pledged, if he were an honourable person, was a better security than any written document given by a dishonourable one; because, if there exist a disposition to violate engagements, there will never be wanting a pretext to destroy documents; whereas, by appearing to have confidence in their honour, he was most likely to ensure the faithful performance of the capitulation. Under these circumstances, he did not deem it expedient to insist upon a formal written capitulation, with the signature of general Arredondo.

These points being fixed, hostilities ceased; and, the same afternoon, the garrison marched out with all the honours of war. *Thirty-seven men and officers were all that remained of the garrison.* They grounded their arms before fifteen hundred of the enemy. Those who were at the bar, or on the river, also became prisoners. Thus fell *the little mud fort of Soto la Marina*, after bravely sustaining a spirited attack of eleven hours. If such a defence had been made in Europe, in India, or any other part of the civilized world, it would have occupied no ordinary rank in the gazettes and military annals of the present age; and at least the commander of the fort and his brave associates would have been respected in their persons, and not have experienced a base and cruel violation of the terms of surrender.

When general Arredondo saw the little band march out of the fort and ground their arms, he approached their commander, and petulantly asked, "Are these the whole garrison?" Being answered in the affirmative, he abruptly turned round to the commanding officer of the regiment of Ferdinand VII. and exclaimed, "Is it possible?"

The loss of the royalists was three hundred killed, and a proportionate number wounded. The valuable depot of arms and military stores which fell into their hands, seemed to console them in some measure for the severe loss they had sustained; and for the first two days, the little band of heroes were at liberty, and every thing indicated good faith on the part of the royalists. Their officers in general offered major Sardá and his men their congratulations on the happy conclu-

sion of the late affair, and stated that general Arredondo had received a recent proclamation of the viceroy, promising the royal amnesty to all those of Mina's expedition who should abandon it; that they should be furnished with passports to the United States; money to bear their expenses; and consequently they might rely on the capitulation being strictly fulfilled. These, however, were short-lived promises; and on the third day the unhappy captives saw the first breach of the capitulation made, by their being placed under guard, and a part being forced to bury the dead and destroy the works. Shortly after, they saw their comrades of the foraging party, who had been taken on the 3d of June, and who had experienced from their captor, Don Felipe La Garza, a treatment the most humane, led to the front of the camp, and shot. No other reason was assigned for this barbarous act, but that they were not included in the capitulation. One of the prisoners was lieutenant Hutchinson, a citizen of the United States. His wounds were so severe, that he was unable to sit up. He was shot as he lay in his litter. This tragedy taught the other prisoners to have little confidence in the faith of men capable of such wanton cruelty; and it was now generally anticipated, that the capitulation would be wholly set aside.

The venerable prelate Dr. Mier, celebrated for his virtues and his sufferings, was denounced by the rector of Soto la Marina, (a European Spaniard,) for having performed the sacred ceremonies of the mass with *vino mescal*, (a spirit distilled from one of the species of maguey,) instead of wine. The rector, it will be recollected, received Mina with open arms, and afterwards, on his giving a promise to return, was permitted to leave the village; but he came back only when the royalists had entered the place. The denunciation in question, however farcical it may appear to the reader, was fatal to the venerated Dr. Mier. In vain would he have stated that no wine could be procured, and that if he had not substituted vino mescal, he could not have performed the duty of celebrating the mass to the garrison. The worthy old man, in whose countenance shone a spirit of meekness and

serenity that would have softened savages, became the object of insulting jests and outrage. He was loaded with enormous shackles, and in that deplorable state, he was sent under an escort to the city of Mexico. We afterwards learned, that on the road, from debility and ill usage, he had the misfortune to fracture a limb. When he arrived at Mexico, he was delivered to the holy office of the Inquisition, and again incarcerated in his former abode in the dungeons of that horrible instrument of religion, perverted from its sacred and holy design.

The garrison were all kept under close arrest for ten days, were then sent as prisoners to Altamira, and there put in confinement. This was such a direct infraction of the capitulation, that the prisoners naturally concluded they would ere long be treacherously sacrificed; they therefore meditated an attempt to escape. Accordingly, a plan was arranged among the greater part of the prisoners, to rise upon the guard, make their way to Tampico, and there, in case of necessity, embark in the vessels then lying in the port. An enterprise of this kind was not so difficult or desperate as may at the first view be imagined. A small band of intrepid men, indignant at the violation of the capitulation, seeing before them no other prospect but a miserable captivity, and determined to die rather than remain captives, must be, under such circumstances, capable of performing extraordinary deeds; and there is little doubt, that if they had once overcome the guard, they would have succeeded. But unfortunately for them, their intentions were suspected, or else discovered by one of their own party, and within about an hour of the time when they contemplated striking the blow, they were astonished by the sudden appearance of a detachment of soldiers entering their prison.

The royalist officer who commanded the party of soldiers, informed the captives that he had orders to put them in irons, but knew not for what cause. Accordingly, they were all heavily ironed, and conducted to different places of confinement in the town. Then commenced a scene of cruelty towards these

miserable men, which, if it were possible to be described, would find but few readers willing to believe the horrid detail. Few, very few of those captives are now living; but should any of them cast their eye on this statement of their sufferings, they will readily perceive that the following sketch is a mere outline of the miseries they endured.

They were conducted to Vera Cruz by the circuitous route of Pachuca, twenty-five leagues from the city of Mexico. Although on horseback, the weight of their irons, the length of the journey, want of wholesome food, and oppressive heat, brought on debility and disease. Their distress and torments seemed to excite joy among their Spanish conductors. Some, overcome with their sufferings, fainted on the road, and were fastened to their horses with cords; others became frantic, and begged to be shot or bayoneted; while the remainder were driven along like cattle, to the end of the day's march, and then thrown into wretched hovels, swarming with vermin. A pittance of coarse food, barely sufficient to sustain life, was given them, but so great was their fatigue and bodily pain, that to eat was to add to their sufferings. Extreme debility of course ensued, and as scarcely any rest was allowed them, it became almost impossible for any one of them even to bear the weight of his irons. Indeed, had it not been for the humanity of the Mexican population, very few would have survived.

In this dreadful condition they at length reached the city of Vera Cruz, where fourteen of them were incarcerated during a night in a room not capable of containing four men at their ease. They were all huddled together, and so closely wedged, that they were obliged to stand upright. No air entered the place. A general suffocation had nearly taken place. An officer, reduced to the last extremity, begged for a little water. The sentinel who was applied to, replied, he had positive orders to grant nothing, and wished the officer a speedy passage to the other world.

The dungeons in the castle of San Juan de Ulua, on a small island opposite Vera Cruz, in which these victims were afterwards confined, cannot be compared with any others in the world. Situated about fourteen feet under the arches of

the castle, a gloomy light can only be admitted by a small grating at the top. There is a constant humidity; and as the bottom of the dungeon is below the level of the sea, water oozes in, and has opened passages through which crabs find access. These were finally welcome visiters to the prisoners, serving them for occasional food. The number confined in so small a space, soon produced a pestilential air, and disease became general among them. The sentinels, on opening the doors, frequently fainted away on inhaling the horrid effluvia issuing from the dungeon. The daily allowance of food was four ounces of bread, three of rice, and three of beans. This however was frequently curtailed, and was cooked in so disgusting a manner, without salt, that nothing but extreme hunger could induce some of the prisoners to touch any thing but the bread. In vain they begged that the sick should be separated from those that still retained some remnant of health. They were all chained indiscriminately in pairs, and on opening the dungeon one morning, two were found dead in their chains.

At length, when an order came to remove the sick, it was only executed in extreme cases, and even then, the victim was removed to the hospital in irons, which were never struck off, till death had put an end to the miserable sufferer. There was one instance of such deliberate and savage cruelty, as to excite the indignation and reprehension of several Spanish officers.

One of the prisoners, a citizen of the United States, had the skin of his leg chafed by the irons. From the want of dressings, and wholesome aliment, the sore rapidly increased. The irritation and pressure of the iron, caused the flesh and muscles to become completely ulcerated to the bone; the whole leg became a mass of corruption. Unavailing were his petitions to have the irons taken off; his groans and excruciating agonies at length so far arrested the attention of his keepers, that he was removed to the hospital. The physician, on examining the horrid state of the leg, immediately addressed a representation to the governor, stating, that unless the irons were removed, death would inevitably ensue. Upon *the margin* of the memorial, the governor wrote the following in-

human replication, and sent it to the officer of the guard: "*Que los lleva, mientras respira.*" *Whilst he breathes, he shall wear them.* This barbarian was the brigadier Don Juan Evia. In a few hours this victim of Spanish inhumanity expired.

We forbear swelling our pages with the farther recital of these barbarous acts, and conclude by stating, that of the thirty-seven officers and soldiers who capitulated at Soto la Marina, and about thirty others, foreigners of Mina's party, who, before and subsequent to that affair, had fallen into the hands of the royalists, at least thirty died, at Altamira, on the route to Vera Cruz, and in the dungeons of San Juan de Ulua.

The few that survived the horrors of those dungeons, were shipped for Spain, to await the farther orders of the king. On their passage to the Peninsula, they were treated with every indignity and cruelty, with the exception of four, who were sent from Havana in the Spanish brig of war *Ligero*, commanded by captain *Martinez*. This benevolent officer treated them with kindness, had their irons taken off during the passage, and gave them wholesome food.

In order to illustrate how far the Spanish authorities in Mexico carried their vindictive feelings against every individual connected with Mina's party, we must notice their conduct to a French female, who had accompanied the expedition from Galvezton. The name of this extraordinary woman is *La Mar*. She had formerly resided at Carthagena, and had distinguished herself on many occasions, for her intrepidity and aversion to the Spaniards. At Soto la Marina, her attentions to the sick and wounded were unceasing; and during the siege she acted with the spirit of an Amazon. On the march to Altamira and Tampico, although exposed to the wanton and scornful jests of the Spaniards, she sustained herself with unshaken fortitude. She constantly displayed a cheerfulness, which, together with her indefatigable exertions to sooth the distresses of the prisoners, proved most consoling to them. She is said to have been afterwards a leading character in the revolt at Altamira. She was sent to Vera Cruz, and there confined in the hospital, where she was compelled to perform

the most disgusting offices to the sick. At length she contrived to make her escape, leaving a letter addressed to the governor of Vera Cruz, and another to the viceroy, containing the most bitter reproaches for the violation of the capitulation, and menacing them with the revenge of the patriots. She reached a division of the troops of Guadalupe Victoria, with whom she remained some time, but was so unfortunate as to fall again into the hands of the royalists. In July, 1819, she was confined within the walls of *Xalapa*, condemned to perform servile duties in a private family. In vain has this woman presented frequent petitions to be permitted to leave the country. The spirit of revenge and the cruelty of the immediate agents of Ferdinand VII., appear to have taken the place of their former gallantry to the sex, and they hold her of so much importance, as to determine on keeping her a prisoner.

The fate of the captives who arrived in Spain, was, if possible, more dreadful than their previous sufferings in Mexico. This will be more clearly perceived by the royal order, communicated to the governor of Cadiz, from *Eguia*, the minister of war, of which the following is a translation :—

"The viceroy of New Spain having communicated to this department his intention of despatching for the Peninsula, to be placed at the disposal of our lord the king, the individuals named in the accompanying list, who, having been attached to the rabble (gavilla) with which the traitor Xavier Mina invaded the territory of that kingdom, took the benefit of the amnesty (indulto) which the viceroy had there proclaimed, his majesty has been graciously pleased to command the supreme council of war, to determine what would be the best measures to adopt respecting them, on their arrival at Cadiz, or any other port in the Peninsula; and the said tribunal having declared its opinion, which has been approved of by his majesty, he has been pleased to order, 'That the thirty-six individuals comprising the said list, shall, on their arrival in Spain, be distributed by fours, to the presidios of Cadiz, Malaga, Melilla, Peñon, Ceuta, and Alhucemas, and the remaining twelve shall be placed at the disposal of the captain general of Ma-

jorca, in order that they may be distributed in the same proportions through the district under his command.' In these places, they are to be retained as *convicts*, (presidarios,) there to remain during the pleasure of his majesty. The said governors are most scrupulously to watch over their conduct, and give timely notice of any thing they may remark, in order that the *greatest rigour* may be enforced against them; keeping constantly in view, that they are responsible for whatever disturbance may be created by them, in whom not the smallest confidence can be placed, until by indubitable proofs they render themselves worthy of it, and of the clemency of his majesty. This royal decree is sent for your government, that as far as concerns yourself, you may be prepared to carry it into execution.

Signed. "EGUIA.

"*Madrid, June* 11, 1818."

On the arrival of these unfortunate men at Cadiz, the royal order just cited was strictly carried into effect, and they were despatched to Malaga, and the presidios on the coast of Africa. Their treatment was various, and depended on the caprice of the several commandants. To a few, it is true, some kindness was shown, but the majority were loaded with chains, and linked to a galley slave, a Spanish, or a negro malefactor. Some were thrown into dungeons among the vilest criminals; and any melioration of these scenes of cruelty, could only be effected by money. But the little pecuniary supplies which were sent to them, by benevolent Americans and others, from Gibraltar and Malaga, were in some instances extorted from them by their merciless keepers, on the most absurd and trifling pretexts. In fact, so deplorable was their situation, that many of them contemplated, and some of them actually succeeded in escaping to the Moors; thereby risking their lives, rather than remain in the hands of the Spaniards.

It is thus made manifest, by this unadorned narrative, that in despite of every principle of honour and humanity, the gallant fellows who capitulated at Soto la Marina, were not only deprived of most of the stipulations of that solemn capitula-

tion, but after suffering the most horrid outrages, were at last condemned, by a royal decree, to indefinite or perpetual bondage, as if they had been malefactors of the worst class.

No subtlety of policy can sanction a breach of good faith so inhuman and flagrant; and surely no civilized nation in the world, besides Spain, would at the present day openly avow, that she was not bound to fulfil engagements solemnly entered into under a capitulation, which her honour was pledged to observe.

The Spanish government may possibly have been authorized, by some precedents in the page of history, in refusing to extend the principles of civilized warfare, to her subjects in a state of rebellion, and to the citizens and subjects of other nations, who were aiding them in their struggles: but when a capitulation was made with these banditti, (as they were called by the royalists,) and when the royal amnesty had been offered to all who should submit, surely no apology can be found for treating such engagements and promises as mere delusions to gain possession of the hapless victims, who were credulous enough to rely on Spanish faith.

If the breach of the capitulation of Soto la Marina stood by itself, a single instance of Punic faith, it is probable that the Spanish government could have cloaked it by some fair pretext; but when we throw back even a hasty glance over the record of her American history, and see the many instances that start forth to view of capitulations trampled upon, treaties broken, and indultos falsely proffered and cruelly violated, the Mexican may forget that Carthage ever existed, and henceforth for Punic, adopt the stigma of Spanish faith.

The infamous decree of the *Cortes*, dated the 10th of April, 1813, appears to have been the rule of conduct which has been pursued by every viceroy, captain general, and commandant of the royal troops, from that period up to the present day. The decree alluded to, and which must sully the archives of the Cortes, so long as it remains unrepealed, contains the following words:—"*That it was derogatory to the majesty and dignity of the national congress, to confirm a capitulation made with malignant insurgents.*"

This decree was made for the express purpose of invalidating a solemn capitulation, which had been concluded in July, 1812, between general *Monteverde*, commander of the royal Spanish forces in Venezuela, and general *Miranda*, as chief of the revolutionists.

The basis of that capitulation was, that the life, property and person of every citizen should be held sacred; that no one should be persecuted for the past; and that a general oblivion and amnesty should be granted. In virtue of this capitulation, above *four thousand* revolutionists delivered up their arms to the royal commander; but no sooner did Monteverde find himself fixed in the seat of power, at the city of Caracas, than he openly avowed his determination to annul the capitulation. This barbarian appears to have anticipated the atrocious decree of the Cortes, which we have quoted, and seems to have been perfectly aware, that all the cruelties he was about to perpetrate, would be sanctioned by the boasted Spanish congress.

As soon as the revolutionary troops were disarmed throughout the province, Monteverde sent parties of dissolute soldiery to seize on almost every respectable Creole in the province. They were torn from the arms of their wives and children, bound to horses' tails, and thus brought to the city of Caracas. After being exposed to the scoffs and insults of a brutal soldiery, they were thrown into close and damp dungeons, crowded together in a manner more dreadful than the victims who perished in the black hole of Calcutta. The streets were filled with unhappy wives, crying out for their husbands, mothers for their sons, and sisters for their brothers; Monteverde and his satellites rejoicing, as beholding in such a spectacle the humiliation and despair of the Creoles. Private property was seized in every direction; distinguished females were dragged to the public square; there they were stripped naked, and treated in a manner most brutal. Doctor J. G. Roscio, who had been secretary of state under Miranda, and had rendered himself an object of universal esteem by the simplicity of his manners, the extent of his erudition, the in-

tegrity of his life, and the splendour of his talents devoted to the freedom of his native country, was loaded with chains, put into the stocks, and there exposed to the insults and derision of the European Spaniards. He was afterwards conveyed to a dungeon at La Guayra, until an opportunity offered to transport him, the venerable Canon of Chili, and other illustrious victims, to Spain. The events of the South American revolution ought to afford perpetual lessons to tyrants. The sage Roscio, after all the vicissitudes of his life, stands on ground from which he may look down upon the satellites of kings. He is now one of the civil heads of the government of Venezuela; and to him the royal authorities are now offering their supplications for a truce. The decree of the 10th of April, 1813, cannot be forgotten by one of its most illustrious victims.

Above *fifteen hundred Creoles* of the highest respectability in the country, were chained in pairs, conducted to the horrid dungeons of La Guayra and Puerto Cavello, where, in a few weeks, many of them perished by suffocation and disease. While Monteverde was thus displaying his system of perfidy and revenge at the city of Caracas, his agents were pursuing the same measures throughout every village and town of that extensive country.

The catalogue of horrors committed by those agents is of so long and disgusting a nature, that we forbear to enter into a detail of them; suffice it to say, that one of the common methods of punishing those who had been employed under Miranda, or were suspected of disaffection to the Spanish government, was to mutilate their persons in a manner so shocking, that it is necessary to have seen, as the writer has done, these unfortunate wretches, to believe that such horrors could be perpetrated, even by the most brutal savages.

The reader will bear in mind, that these dreadful outrages, as well as the violation of the capitulation, are matters of such notoriety, that neither the Spanish government, nor its subjects, have ever attempted to palliate the accounts of them which have been published; but, on the contrary, have not only by the infamous decree of the Cortes of the 10th of April, 1813, open-

ly sanctioned the violation of such capitulations, but subsequently have approved of all the horrors committed by Monteverde, in decreeing him high military and civil honours.

If our limits would permit, we could furnish a long catalogue of capitulations violated, and royal indultos disregarded by the Spanish authorities; but we have confined ourselves to the two breaches of good faith in the cases of Caracas and Soto la Marina, because they were accompanied by such a flagrant departure from principles held sacred even by the rudest nations of the world, and by such scenes of wanton cruelty exercised upon the Creoles, that every impartial reader must unite with us in execrating as well the government as its agents, who have thus dared to perform such acts in the nineteenth century.

For such enormities no common retribution can atone, and already thousands of Spaniards have been immolated to the spirit of retaliation excited among the Creoles, by the barbarous and impolitic conduct of the Spanish government; we say impolitic, because such scenes have tended not only to make reconciliation between the European Spaniards and the Creoles almost impossible at the present day, but even admitting a conciliation was now to take place, it *can never be sincere or durable between the parties*. We shall conclude this chapter, by stating a solemn proof of the extent of this spirit of retributive vengeance among the Creoles; and it is among the proofs not received solely from public documents, but to which the writer was an eyewitness.

In the latter part of the year 1813, or in the beginning of that of 1814, general Bolivar, the republican chief of Venezuela, had retaken nearly the whole of the country, and had penned up the Spaniards in the city of Puerto Cavello. Bolivar at that time had in his possession above *thirteen hundred European Spaniards prisoners*. The royalists had likewise in their hands, at Puerto Cavello, *about three hundred and fifty Creole prisoners*. Notwithstanding this disproportion of numbers, Bolivar repeatedly offered to deliver up the whole of his European prisoners, in exchange for the three hundred and fifty Creoles.

These offers were not only rejected, but Bolivar's flags of truce were treated with outrage, and the most insulting answers sent to his proposals. The royal commandant at Puerto Cavello, (his name we believe to be *Istuetta,)* a proud and obstinate Biscayan, was daily employed in shooting a given number of Creole prisoners, on the ramparts of Puerto Cavello, in full view of Bolivar and his army. The indignation excited by this wanton and outrageous barbarity may easily be conceived. At length Bolivar informed the commandant that if he persisted in refusing an exchange of prisoners, and continued to sacrifice those under his power, a dreadful retaliation should ensue. This produced no other effect on the barbarous commandant, than an insulting letter to Bolivar, declaring his resolution to put to death every Creole in the fortress. There remained no alternative. Bolivar despatched an order to the governor of the city of Caracas, *to execute every European Spaniard that was confined in that city and at La Guayra.* This dreadful order was carried into literal and prompt execution, and not more than twenty or thirty of the European Spaniards, who were prisoners, were saved from the terrible sentence.

The writer, as well as many other foreigners, was present at the execution of above *eight hundred of these victims at La Guayra.* They were taken out of the dungeons, and conducted in pairs a short distance from the town, and there shot; after which, their bodies were burned. Many of these unfortunate beings, who knew that their sacrifice was the result of the unfeeling obstinacy and cruelty of the Spanish government and its officers, deliberately conversed on the subject while walking to the place of execution, and several of them uttered the most horrible curses against the authors of their calamities.

We shall now resume the narrative of Mina's operations at Sombrero.

CHAPTER VIII.

Situation of the city of Mexico, and the measures of the viceroy—Failure of the expedition of Mina against the Villa de Leon—Arrival of the army under Don Pasqual Liñan, before Sombrero—Forms his line of circumvallation—Situation of the Fort—Commencement of active operations—Detail of events—Sortie on the encampment of Don Pedro Celestino Negrete—Sally of general Mina—Detail of events—Gallant defence of the Fort, on the 18th of August—Evacuation of the Fort—Massacre of the fugitives, of the wounded, and of the prisoners—Memoir of Don Pasqual Liñan.

WHILST Mina was making his arrangements in Sombrero, opening a correspondence with the royal towns, and adopting the best measures in his power for future military operations, the royalists were likewise uncommonly active. The government of Spain had early sent orders to the viceroy, to abandon, if necessary, every other object, and direct all his exertions to the crushing of Mina. The viceroy had calculated, that after the measures which had been previously adopted, the large force collected in the internal provinces was sufficient to overwhelm Mina. But when the news of the rencounter at Peotillos reached Mexico, it aroused him at once to a sense of his danger. The state of the capital was also such as to aggravate his fears; for the city of Mexico had long abounded in men of republican principles; but as the revolution unfortunately began among the most ignorant and wretched population of the country, nearly all the intelligent part of society, for the reasons which have already been set forth, rallied round the royal standard; awaiting the moment when the revolutionary paroxysms among the lower orders should subside, or some leader of more consequence than had hitherto appeared, should spring up. They

would then have thrown their exertions into the scale of their country on the first favourable occasion. In Mina they at length beheld the man on whom they could rely. To him they looked as the individual who should plant the banners of liberty on the Mexican capital. Nor was this feeling confined to the Creoles. Many European Spaniards were enthusiastically attached to Mina, and the only cause of regret was, that he had not brought a sufficient number of foreign troops to inspire confidence; for although his name alone struck terror into the royal authorities, and a party in his favour was daily augmenting, yet it was not in his power to hold out a certainty of personal protection. And since under a vigilant and despotic government, time and caution were absolutely requisite to form a combination; many individuals were restrained from abandoning their families to the horrors which they knew must result from their too premature espousal of the cause of liberty. These considerations operated as a check on the patriotic inhabitants of the capital and other royal towns, but they secretly panted for his advance, and were prepared to join him at the first auspicious moment.

So encouraged were his partisans by his extraordinary successes, that they met in coffee houses in the city of Mexico, discussed the news of the day, and betrayed their hopes and fears so openly, that it could not escape the notice of the government. Coercive measures were adopted against some distinguished citizens, but still the ferment in the capital did not subside.

After the defeat of the royal troops at Peotillos, the viceroy saw that the invasion was assuming a formidable aspect, and that if Mina was not immediately checked, all would be lost. Roused, therefore, by this critical state of affairs, he withdrew such of the European troops from the numerous royal cantonments whose situation would permit of it, and united them with the native infantry and his best Creole cavalry. But great as was the emergency, he could concentrate only about five thousand men. Upon this army hung the fate of the government; and if it had been destroyed, which would have been the case had Padre Torres acted as he should have

done, no similar force could have been raised. Our reasons for this assertion will be adduced in their proper place.

The command of this army, destined for the overthrow of Mina, was conferred on *Don Pasqual Liñan*, a mariscal de campo. He held likewise the distinguished rank of inspector general of Mexico, the officer next in rank to the viceroy. Liñan, by rapid marches, arrived in the province of Guanaxuato, in the middle of July. Mina was accurately and regularly advised of the movements of the enemy, from their own towns: but, placing a firm reliance on the arrival of the supply of provisions, ammunition, and men, which he hourly expected, according to the promises of Padre Torres, and having no doubt, likewise, that the latter, as well as the other patriot chiefs, would concentrate their forces to assist him, as had been arranged, he determined to await the arrival of Liñan at the fort of Sombrero. Mina's force in the fort, at that time, had been augmented to five hundred rank and file.

At the close of the month, information was brought to Mina, that the troops composing the garrison of the Villa de Leon had that morning marched from the town, leaving only a small detachment for its defence. Conceiving that this afforded him a good opportunity to try the character of his recruits, and strike a blow against the enemy, he determined to attack the place. The Villa de Leon is an extensive, populous, and wealthy town, situated in a plain, abounding with wheat fields. After Mina's arrival at Sombrero, the enemy, anticipating an attack on Leon, strengthened its works. Its garrison was likewise augmented to seven hundred men, who were under the command of brigadier *Don Pedro Celestino Negrete*, a man famous in the annals of the revolution for acts of depravity and cruelty. The streets leading to the principal square of the town were defended by a traverse, composed of a wall, with a ditch on the outside. This work inclosed the buildings, consisting of lofty churches and heavy mansions. The place had hitherto been considered impregnable, having baffled all the efforts of the patriots to take it. From their massive architecture, every house and church was in itself a fortification.

Mina, on the same evening that he received the information, after having taken every precaution to prevent intelligence of his design being conveyed to the enemy, marched from the fort with his division and some Creole cavalry, in all about five hundred men, and a piece of artillery. His intention was to take the enemy by surprise, in the night. On arriving within half a mile of the town, a picquet of the enemy was unexpectedly encountered, which fled and alarmed the garrison; who, it afterwards appeared, had been strongly reenforced by a division of Liñan's army; a circumstance of which Mina was totally ignorant. On arriving near the square, his troops were received by a heavy fire from the artillery, and musketry from the tops of the houses. The attack was made with vigour; but all attempts to carry it failed: the storming parties were overpowered by numbers. The Guard of Honour and regiment of the Union, succeeded, however, in dislodging the enemy from a strong barrack, and took a few prisoners; but they could not force their way any farther. At dawn, the general, finding it impracticable to carry the place, drew off his troops, and fell back upon the fort. So well satisfied were the enemy to get rid of him, that they made no attempt to harass him on his retreat. This was the first reverse experienced by the arms of Mina. It was severe: the killed and wounded were nearly one hundred, and among them were several foreigners. Some of the wounded, who could not be brought off, fell into the hands of the enemy, and were immediately put to death; while the prisoners that Mina had taken were liberated.

On the morning of the 30th of July, intelligence was received, that the enemy were in the plain before the fort; and, soon after, the army of Liñan was seen ascending the heights. It consisted, according to their own official statements, of the following troops:—

European regiment of		Zaragoza, -	617
Creole	do.	Toluca, - -	250
European	do.	Navarre -	463
		Amount carried forward	1330

Amount brought forward,	1330
Cavalry—Fieles de San Luis, San Carlos, Queretaro, Nueva Galicia, Colima, Sierra Gorda, and Realistas de Apan, - - -	1211
A division, under the command of colonel Don Juan Rafol, - - -	1000
	3541

Ten pieces of artillery, and two howitzers.

This statement we believe to be underrated; but, even admitting it to be correct, it was a formidable force for the little garrison to contend against. Imposing, however, as appeared the strength of the enemy, Mina felt so confident of repulsing them, that he ordered a red flag to be displayed from the battery which crowned the conical hill within the fort.

The situation of the fortress has already been described. On the eminence in advance of the main entrance into the fort, the enemy placed in battery seven pieces of artillery, from four to twelve pounders, and two howitzers. There Liñan fixed his head-quarters, with the first division of his army, composed of the regiment of Zaragoza, and four hundred and forty-eight cavalry, under the command of brigadier Loaces. The second division, consisting of the regiment of Toluca, and three hundred and eighty-four cavalry, under brigadier Negrete, were intrenched on the southernmost of two ridges projecting from the south end of the fort. In advance of his encampment, upon a small knoll, he threw up a redoubt of one gun, about long musket-shot from the fort. The third division, comprising the regiment of Navarra, and three hundred and seventy-nine cavalry, under colonel Don José Ruiz, were stationed at the watering place: and the section under Don Juan Rafol was employed as a corps of observation, to watch the movements of Padre Torres, between Leon and Guanaxuato. These dispositions were unquestionably skilful, and well calculated to cause Mina and his garrison to view seriously the coming attack: but they were strangers to apprehension or despondency.

The fort was not calculated to sustain either a formal siege or a vigorous assault. Padre Torres had not sent any of the expected provisions; and a supply for ten days was all that the fort contained. The ammunition also was deficient, but twenty-five boxes remaining. But the most serious evil was, that the third division of the enemy was so posted as to cut off all communication between the garrison and the water in the ravine. It was, however, hoped that this evil would not be seriously felt, as the rainy season had commenced. The only succour which the garrison received from Padre Torres, was about two days previous to the arrival of the enemy, and consisted of sixty cavalry, under the command of Don Miguel Borja. The whole force of the garrison, including these and a party of the cavalry of Don Encarnacion Ortiz, did not exceed six hundred and fifty. When to these are added the peasantry who were employed in working parties, the women, and children, the whole number of souls in the fort was about nine hundred.

At day-break of the 31st, the enemy opened a heavy fire of shot and shells, which continued incessantly till dark; their fire being occasionally returned by the fort. This cannonading continued, with little intermission, during the whole of the siege; and on some days, the besiegers discharged from their battery on the hill as many as six hundred shot and shells. To the besieged, this appeared a useless expenditure of ammunition, unless it was intended to display the great resources and indefatigable exertions of the enemy; for, as the principal buildings were under cover of the conical hill, and the others were in such positions as to be protected by the rocks, and as no one moved from his covert unless compelled by duty, the fire of the enemy was ineffectual, their shot falling harmless among the rocks, or flying entirely over the fort. Indeed, their artillery was so unskilfully served, that it annoyed their own works on the south side. This random firing continued for several days, without any casualty occurring, except among the horses which were roaming about the fort.

The enemy undoubtedly flattered himself with the hope of making an easy conquest of the fort, expecting that the first

assault would produce a surrender. At two o'clock A. M. on the 5th of August, a spirited attack was made upon the fort, at three points which were considered assailable: but it failed, and the enemy were compelled to retire, with some loss. In this affair, the general, who commanded in person at the main entrance, displayed his usual intrepidity. With a lance in his hand, he was foremost in withstanding the enemy, and received a slight wound.

But now another circumstance created more serious uneasiness than the assaults of the enemy. The communication with the ravine, on which the garrison was entirely dependent for water, had been totally cut off, by the third division of the enemy, who had intrenched themselves in an impregnable position close to the watering place, and who at night posted a chain of videttes along the ravine. Mina, as well as Moreno, had calculated that it was practicable to cover the watering parties from the fort; and to have anticipated this disaster, by preserving water within the fort, was impossible, as there was but one small tank, capable of holding no more than was sufficient for a few hours' supply. As the rainy season had commenced, it had been supposed that the garrison would not suffer for want of water. All these expectations were disappointed: for the watering parties, which were sent out nightly, generally returned without having succeeded in their attempt, or with such a partial supply as was of no adequate use; and, although it constantly rained around, yet no rain fell in the fort. The watering parties being obliged to descend to the rivulet down the declivity of a very deep barranca, which rendered it impossible to conduct these sallies with any degree of order, the enemy were always apprized of their approach, and of course prepared to resist them. Hence it was, that no supplies of any consequence could be obtained. Those who have not seen the Mexican barrancas, can scarcely form an idea of the difficulties they present at every step. Abounding in immense rocks, precipices, and thick bushes, it is impossible to conduct any military enterprise with compactness and order.

The small quantity of water which each individual had collected on the first appearance of the enemy, had been soon

expended. The only well in the fort, which was at the house of Don Pedro Moreno, had never contained water. All the stagnant water in the crevices around the fort, was consumed. The horrors of thirst became dreadful. Recourse was had to some wild celery, which luckily grew around the fort: it was plucked, at the risk of life. But these were only partial alleviations. Some of the people were four days without tasting a drop of water.

The situation of the garrison was fast approaching to a crisis. The troops at their posts were hourly becoming less capable of exertion, from the severity of their sufferings. Horses and cattle were wandering about, in the greatest distress. The cries of children, calling on their unhappy mothers for water, gave to the scene of suffering peculiar horror. The countenance of the general showed how deeply he sympathized in the sufferings of his associates: but he cheered them with the hope that the God of nature would not abandon them; he pointed to the heavy clouds with which the atmosphere was loaded, as the source from which relief would speedily be obtained; and such was the effect that Mina's example and consoling observations inspired, that each individual strove to vie with another in bearing with fortitude the severity of his distress. With anxious expectation, they marked the approach of the heavily charged clouds, hoping that the predictions of a supply from them would soon be verified. Every vessel was ready to receive the grateful showers. The women brought out the images of their saints, supplicating their intervention for that relief which Heaven only could bestow. The clouds covered the fort: no sound was heard, amidst the general anxiety of the wretched garrison, save the thunder of the enemy's artillery, whose troops, with savage exultation, looked down on the besieged from their position on the hill. The flattering clouds passed slowly over the fort,—the moment was anxiously looked for, which was to ease their sufferings;—a few drops fell;—anxiety was wrought up to the highest pitch;—but the clouds passed, and burst at a short distance from them! Language is inadequate to describe the emotions of despair which at that moment were depicted on every

countenance in the fort. For several days the clouds continued thus to pass, without discharging a single drop on the parched garrison, who had the cruel mortification of seeing their enemies frequently drenched with rain, and the large lake of Lagos constantly in view. Such were the trials experienced at this ill-fated spot. At length, after a lapse of four days, a slight shower fell. Every article capable of containing the desired fluid was in readiness, and in spite of the incessant fire of the enemy, a supply was collected, sufficient to yield a temporary relief to the suffering garrison. A small supply was collected in reserve.

The bread stuff, which it had been impossible to use, for want of water, now became serviceable; and the troops were invigorated. Many of the Creole recruits, during the late scene of distress, had made their escape, which had considerably diminished the numbers of the garrison.

During this time, Padre Torres had marched from Remedios with a body of troops, and a small supply of provisions; but advancing with his accustomed carelessness, he fell into an ambush, laid by the enemy near Silao. His troops made scarcely any opposition, and were soon dispersed; every one fleeing to his home. The Padre made his way back to Remedios. The provisions were at some distance in the rear, and escaped falling into the hands of the enemy. No further attempts were made by the Padre to succour the fort, although he knew that it must inevitably fall, if not speedily relieved. All his promises to Mina were thus forgotten, or deliberately violated. The enemy, notwithstanding their vast superiority, had met with such an unexpected repulse in their late assault, that they declined making another attempt, and directed all their attention to reduce the fort by famine; well knowing that without water or provisions, it could not hold out long. To prevent the introduction of supplies, as well as the retreat of the garrison, they stationed picquets of cavalry, in all directions about the fort. Nevertheless, some resolute men did bring in a few articles every night, but they were supplies not very essential to the garrison. The enemy still kept up an incessant fire from the hill, and by stationing some light troops

among the rocks, considerably annoyed the besieged; but very little loss resulted, from the reasons already mentioned. The posts could only be relieved at night, and even then the danger was great, from occasional random discharges of grape shot from the hill. The ammunition of the besieged was fast diminishing, and could only afford occasional discharges; but as the foreigners, particularly the American citizens, were far superior marksmen to the enemy, many of their skirmishers were killed.

In the meantime, the enemy occasionally held conferences with the garrison. Some of the Spanish officers, who had been intimate with Mina in Spain, advanced to the walls of the fort to see him. They used every possible argument to induce Mina to accept the royal amnesty. They urged in support of it, his forlorn situation, and the impossibility that relief could be given him. Mina answered them with frankness, and explained the motives which had induced him to espouse his cause, and concluded by informing them, that his determination was taken to conquer or die. They parted on the most friendly terms; the officers expressing their regret at his inflexibility. A momentary cessation of hostilities having taken place, upon the return of the officers to their posts, the action was renewed.

Three nights after the attempt by the enemy to enter the fort, Mina, with two hundred and forty men, made a sortie on the encampment of Negrete. The remains of the Guard of Honour and regiment of the Union, thirty in number, all Americans, with the general at their head, surprised and carried the redoubt thrown up on the knoll. The main body of the enemy, which was encamped some distance in the rear, was alarmed, and on the alert before the Americans could reach them. Had they been properly supported by their Creole companions, something important might have been accomplished. But the Creoles would not advance; thus leaving the Americans to sustain a sharp conflict, until, overpowered by numbers, they were obliged to retreat to the fort. This was effected under a heavy fire from the enemy, which killed and wounded several. Among them were eleven of

the little band of foreigners. Some of the wounded men could not be brought off, and therefore fell into the hands of the enemy. And it will scarcely be thought possible, but such was the fact, that the atrocious commanding officer, having ordered those wounded men to be carried in full view of the fort, caused them to be strangled in the sight of their commiserating and enraged comrades, whose attention had been cruelly attracted to the scene. Their bodies, stripped of their clothes, were thrown down the precipice of the barranca, to become the feast of vultures.

The general now saw, that unless some speedy external relief was afforded, the fall of the fort was inevitable; and finding that Torres fulfilled none of the promises he had made, nor was making any diversion in his favour, he took the bold determination of going in person, to endeavour to procure the necessary assistance which he still flattered himself would be furnished by Torres. Accordingly, the night after the sortie on Negrete, he left the fort, accompanied by only three companions; his aid, Don Miguel Borja, and Don Encarnacion Ortiz; leaving colonel Young in command of the garrison. They eluded, but with difficulty, the vigilance of the enemy. Mina, in a short time, made attempts to throw some water and provisions into the fort; but having with him only a few cavalry of Ortiz, he was defeated in his object, by the number and vigilance of the enemy.

Mina had likewise the deep mortification of soon ascertaining, that all the statements of Torres, about the troops he could concentrate, were a mere fiction; or rather, that he had made no effort to effect the concentration which he easily could have done. All hopes of succour from Torres were vain. Under these circumstances, the general sent an order to colonel Young to draw off the garrison.

Meanwhile, the enemy prosecuted the siege with vigour. The cannonading was incessant by day, and continued occasionally at night. A few of the besieged were killed, and several wounded. The stock of water collected from the last shower was exhausted, and the sufferings of the garrison, as well from hunger as thirst, again became intolerable. Several

days had elapsed without water. The children were expiring from thirst; many of the adults had become delirious, and had resorted to the last and most disgusting of all human expedients, to allay for a moment the torments of thirst; while some few, driven to madness, would steal down at night to the rivulet, and flying from the death of thirst, receive it at the hands of their enemies. At this juncture, a generous trait was manifested by the enemy. They were moved to pity at the dreadful situation of the women, and allowed them to descend to the water and drink, but would not permit them to carry any up to the fort. This solitary act of humanity was however rather a "ruse de guerre," as the enemy, by this means, obtained from the women correct information of the state of things in the fort, and finally, on one occasion observing a large number of women at the watering place, with characteristic perfidy they seized them, and sent them as prisoners to the town of Leon.

The besieged were suffering not only the extremity of thirst, but their provisions were nearly all consumed. Every weed around the fort was plucked, and some of the men imagined they found relief by chewing lead. The flesh of horses, asses and dogs, furnished a partial resource.

The stench of the animals which had died for want of food, or from the enemy's shot, and the dead bodies of the enemy which were suffered to lie unburied, caused such a dreadful state of the atmosphere, as to be almost insupportable. Large flocks of vultures, attracted by the dismal scene, were constantly hovering over the fort, and fortunately diminished an evil, which otherwise could not have been borne.

Their sufferings having become intolerable, many of the troops deserted, so that not more than a hundred and fifty effective men remained. The ammunition was so far expended as only to admit of very partial firing. The guns had been for some time served with the enemy's shot; which, dug out at night from the rubbish outside of the fort, was fired back to them in the morning.

The unutterable sufferings of the garrison induced some of the officers to entreat colonel Young to send a flag of truce to

know what terms of capitulation the enemy would enter into. The colonel was decidedly opposed to the measure, but was so importuned by the garrison that he unwillingly consented to it; telling them to remember that the act was at variance with his judgment.

The flag of truce returned with the answer of Liñan, that the foreigners must surrender at discretion, and that the natives should receive the benefit of the royal amnesty. When this answer was reported to colonel Young, he said, it was no more than he expected, and that he hoped that none of the garrison would thenceforth speak to him about capitulating with an enemy, from whom neither mercy nor honour was to be expected.

The enemy, amongst other operations, had latterly directed their fire against the front wall; and as it was built of unbaked bricks and loose stones, the shells that entered it buried themselves therein, and exploding, did irreparable damage to the work. The wall was thus destroyed, and its rubbish so filled up the ditch, as to form a fair, broad passage into the fort. The breaches hitherto made in the wall had been repaired at night; but it was now so completely battered down, that any further attempts to repair it were useless. A work was therefore thrown up within it. In fact, the fort, as well from that cause, as the want of ammunition, the reduced strength of the garrison, and the wretchedness of its defenders from hunger and thirst, was no longer tenable, and colonel Young determined upon its evacuation. While arrangements for that purpose were making on the evening of the 17th, the colonel repaired to the quarters of Don Pedro Moreno, to concert the plan of the sally. There he found Don Pedro, with several of his Creole officers, and major Mauro, who then commanded the cavalry of the division. They told the colonel that the fort could yet be defended, and that they would do it themselves, without the aid of the Americans. Colonel Young, piqued at the ridiculous conduct of major Mauro, resolved to defer the evacuation.

The conduct of Don Pedro, during the siege, had been base in the extreme. He did not take an active part in the

defence; and, while the garrison was suffering from hunger and thirst, he was living in comparative luxury, upon supplies he had preserved in his house. Some trifling succours, as we before observed, had been brought into the fort: he speculated on such part of them as he thought proper, and the residue only he permitted the importers to vend. He would not even allow the swine that he had about his house to be killed, for the use of the men who were defending his country, himself, and his family. During their severe privations, he retailed, at an exorbitant price, pork, lard, sugar, cigars, and even some water which he had collected in the shower. It was therefore a general opinion, that the resistance of this man to the sally, at the time it was proposed, was merely made to gain time to skulk off with his money. With such chiefs as this man, and Padre Torres, were Mina and his brave officers and men fated to act, at this critical juncture.

Colonel Young having determined to defend the fort to the last, declared that he would be the last man to leave it; and to this resolution he fell a sacrifice.

On the 18th, the sound of the enemy's bugles echoed through the barranca, and announced some movement of the besiegers. Their infantry at the watering place, and at the south end of the fort, were observed to be forming, and it was supposed an assault was impending. Preparations for defence were made by the besieged, who, although greatly diminished in numbers, and emaciated by severe privations, yet resolved to prevent the entrance of the enemy, or die in the breach. Colonel Young, ever on the alert, made the most of his handful of troops. Sixty men were placed for the defence of the front wall; and the remaining few were so arranged as to be prepared to meet the assailants at the several points at which an entrance might be gained. Some of the few females who still remained, aware of the horrors to which they would be exposed should the enemy succeed, cheerfully flew to reenforce the several positions, armed with missile weapons.

At one o'clock, the enemy sounded the advance from his head-quarters, which was repeated by his respective divisions.

Soon after, a strong column appeared on the hill, marching down; at the same time, the division at the watering place ascended the hill, threatening the east side; while the other division, at the south end, marched up the hill, carrying scaling ladders. The enemy boldly advanced along the causeway to the breach, under cover of a heavy fire from their battery on the hill, and in face of the galling fire of the garrison from the two flanking works. When within a few paces, the heavy fire they encountered compelled them to halt: unavailing were the endeavours of their officers to get them up to the breach; they retreated in the utmost disorder. At the other points of attack, they were equally unsuccessful. At the south end, the hill being very steep, they ascended with difficulty, and soon became exhausted; and, as they approached, a destructive fire was opened upon them, while the women rolled down huge masses of stone. No longer able to withstand so vigorous and unexpected an opposition, they withdrew their forces, having sustained a severe loss.

At that moment, a copious shower of rain fell: it was the first which had refreshed the garrison for many days. The enemy conceived that this was a propitious moment to renew the assault, presuming that as the fire-arms would be rendered unserviceable from the rain, superior numbers would enable them to force their way into the fort. Again their martial instruments sounded the advance. The column again moved forward, and approached the breach with a scaling ladder, displaying a black flag, as a symbol of the fate which awaited the besieged. Fire-arms could not now be used on either side. The enemy continued to press on, and were opposed only by missile weapons. Fortunately, at this moment, the rain ceased. The defenders of the works were invigorated by the shower; and, when the fire-arms could be used, again commenced a well-directed fire. The bearers of the scaling ladder were killed. The enemy, urged on by their officers, still continued to advance; but, within a few yards of the breach, they received such a galling discharge, that they again broke, flying for shelter among the rocks and bushes, where they remained until night enabled them to retire.

In this affair, the garrison suffered a severe loss, but particularly in the death of the gallant colonel Young, who gloriously fell, in the moment of victory. On the enemy's last retreat, the colonel, anxious to observe all their movements, fearlessly exposed his person, by stepping on a large stone on the ramparts; and, while conversing with Dr. Hennessey on the successes of the day, and on the dastardly conduct of the enemy, the last shot that was fired from their battery carried off his head. Colonel Young was an officer whom, next to Mina, the American part of the division had been accustomed to respect and admire. In every action, he had been conspicuous for his daring courage and skill. Mina reposed unbounded confidence in him. In the hour of danger, he was collected, gave his orders with precision, and, sword in hand, was always in the hottest of the combat. Honour and firmness marked all his actions. He was generous in the extreme, and endured privations with a cheerfulness superior to that of any other officer in the division. He had been in the United States' service, as lieutenant colonel of the twenty-ninth regiment of infantry. His body was interred, by the few Americans who could be spared from duty, with every possible mark of honour and respect; and the general gloom which pervaded the division on this occasion, was the sincerest tribute that could be offered by them to the memory of their brave chief.

The command of the division now devolved on lieutenant colonel Bradburn. Hopes were indulged by the garrison, that the enemy, finding they could not carry the place by storm, would raise the siege. But the enemy were too well aware of the miserable state of the garrison, to allow such a prize as Mina's officers to escape them. They had likewise found, by the extraordinary defence of the fort, that it contained a body of men highly dangerous to the royal cause; and it was supposed that if Mina could be deprived of his foreign troops, he would then be incapable of causing the royalists further serious annoyance.

The enemy, on the following day, evinced not the least indication of raising the siege. And the provisions and ammunition being entirely exhausted, it became impossible to

hold possession of the fort any longer. The abandonment of it was therefore resolved upon; and, every preparation having been made, it was determined that it should take place on the night of the 19th.

On examining the state of the treasury, it was found that there remained in it only about eighteen thousand dollars. This comparatively small amount was caused by the encroachments that had been made on the funds, by the sums paid Torres for provisions; the amount that had been expended for clothing; a sum that had been paid Don Pedro Moreno; an amount that had been taken in doubloons by the general, for the purpose of procuring provisions; and a sum that had been given to Don Pedro, on the night of the 17th, when arrangements had been made for a sally, which money was carried out by the peasantry. These were the causes which had reduced the specie on hand to the sum before mentioned, which amount, together with some spare arms and artillery, were buried; the limbers of the latter were burned, and shot rammed tightly into the guns.

Every thing being in readiness, the garrison prepared to evacuate the fort. A trying scene then took place. The necessity of abandoning the unfortunate wounded, whom, from the nature of the barranca over which it was necessary to pass, it was impossible to carry out, was imperious. The hospital was filled with these victims, the majority of whom were the officers and men who had accompanied Mina from Soto la Marina: they were incapable of bodily exertion, the limbs of the most part being broken. The parting with such men, who had fought so bravely, and who were so devoted to the cause they had espoused, was a heart-rending scene. Some anticipated the fate that awaited them, and entreated their friends to terminate their existence; some indulged hopes of mercy from the Spaniards; while others, overwhelmed with grief and despair, covered their faces, and were unable to bid what they considered a final adieu.

At eleven o'clock at night, colonel Bradburn proceeded with the division to the appointed spot, whence the sally was to be made. The route chosen was through the barranca before de-

scribed, and was the only direction by which there was any chance of escape. On arriving at the rendezvous, colonel Bradburn was surprised to find that Don Pedro, who had reached there first, had imprudently permitted the women and children to precede the march. They soon got into confusion, and by their screams alarmed the enemy; and thus apprized them of what was in agitation. From the difficulty which the barranca presented, it was impracticable for the troops to remain formed in their march, and from this cause, as well as the darkness of the night, they soon dispersed; every one exploring his path, and endeavouring to take care of himself.

In the bottom of the barranca, the picquets and sentries of the enemy were encountered; with whom a continual skirmishing prevailed. Many of the fugitives dropped down from weakness; others were shot by the random fire of the enemy. The screams of the women, the reports of the enemy's muskets, the cries of those who fell, the groans of the wounded, and the intense darkness which reigned around, gave to the scene indescribable horror. Some few were so dismayed, particularly of the females, that they returned to the fort; preferring the chance of a pardon to the risk of that destruction which then seemed inevitable. The greater part, however, by the dawn, had gained the opposite summit of the barranca. Here, many of them flattered themselves, the danger was over; but the foreigners, being ignorant of the topography of the place, were uncertain which way to direct their course, fearing that every step might place them in the power of the enemy. They marched on as chance directed them, in parties of two, three, or six. Soon after day-light, they were beset by parties of the enemy's cavalry, who had been ordered along the summit of the barranca, as soon as it was known that the garrison had evacuated the fort. Another scene of horror began:—the enemy's cavalry rushed in among the flying and kneeling individuals. No quarter was given. Cut to pieces by the sword, or perforated with lances, the greater part of the fugitives were destroyed. The few who escaped, among whom was Don Pedro Moreno, owed their preservation to the dense and foggy state of the atmosphere. The clothes and

money found on the victims, were looked upon as prizes by the cavalry soldiers, who for that reason preferred the killing to making prisoners of them; for if they had spared their lives, and conducted them as prisoners to head-quarters, the booty would not have been so great, as, in that case, they might have lost the clothes.

The next morning, the enemy entered the deserted fort in triumph. Then ensued a tragedy, by the orders of the infuriated Liñan, which it is in vain to attempt to depict in colours sufficiently strong. The hospital, as we have before observed, was filled with wounded; a large majority of whom were foreigners, principally Americans.

Those who could hobble to the square, a few paces distant, were made to do so, while those whose fractured limbs would not permit them to move, were inhumanly *dragged along the ground* to the fatal spot. There stood the ferocious Liñan, feasting on the spectacle. Regardless of their miserable situation, of their former gallant conduct, of the clemency and respect which they had shown to royalist prisoners;—unmindful of all these considerations, he ordered them to be stripped of all their clothes, and shot down, one by one.

Liñan occupied three days in compelling the other prisoners that were found in the fort, to demolish the works; which being effected, he ordered them to be brought to the square and there shot. One of the prisoners, just before he was shot, discovered the place where the treasure and other articles were buried, but this information could not save his life.

Thus terminated the siege of Sombrero. Out of the two hundred and sixty-nine men who had entered the fort with Mina, fifty only escaped.

Liñan, after having completed the destruction of the fort, returned to Villa de Leon, exulting in the exploits which he had performed. It may not be amiss to give a short sketch of his origin and career, from the information we have derived from respectable sources,—from some Spanish European officers. Pasqual Liñan, at the time that Ferdinand entered France, was a soldier in the ranks. He followed the king in the capa-

city of a servant, and remained with him till his return to Spain. Ferdinand became much attached to him; and, desirous of displaying his generosity to Liñan, for the services he had rendered him, requested him to name the manner in which he could best requite his fidelity. "Make me a mariscal de campo," said Liñan. The king, although perhaps surprised at such a request, was at the same time so pleased with the manner in which Liñan had made it, that he said "Muy bien." Accordingly, to the astonishment of the Spanish officers, Pasqual Liñan was created a mariscal de campo, and sent to Mexico, as inspector general. He is deficient in education, and although his personal appearance is imposing, his manners are so coarse, and his conversation so illiterate, that he disgusts those of both sexes who have any intercourse with him. He is hated and despised by his subaltern officers, and although they allow he has animal courage, yet they can discover in him no other than this, almost the least, requisite for a commander in chief. During the siege of Sombrero, he never moved from his head-quarters. He trusted to other officers, entirely, for the planning and execution of all the operations.

It would be neither just nor generous to infer from the conduct of Liñan, that his officers approved of his sanguinary measures, nor do we wish that conclusions should be drawn against the Spanish character, generally, because many of the agents of its barbarous and vindictive government have acted like the monster Liñan. We have seen many Spanish officers, whose humane, generous, and noble feelings, would have done honour to any country.

Those attached to the European regiments under Liñan's orders, particularly interfered to stop his cruel proceedings. They begged him to defer the execution of the prisoners, until he consulted the viceroy. Although they found him inexorable, they continued urging the point to the last moment, openly expressing their abhorrence of his savage acts. We afterwards understood, that a pardon for the prisoners did actually arrive from Mexico; but it was too late, for their blood had

already satiated the vengeance of the brutal Liñan. Upon his head therefore rests the wanton slaughter of the gallant foreigners and others, who fell into his hands; and to him do we impute the horrors which marked the conquest of Sombrero.

The Spanish officers speak in terms of the strongest indignation and disgust of the dreadful scenes committed by this man, and even the citizens of his own politics, who have had any public transactions with him, hold him in fear and abhorrence. He is at present, we believe, in the city of Vera Cruz, of which province he is governor. His conduct there has been so base, and so scandalous, as to cover him with the odium not only of the inhabitants generally, but even of his own countrymen.

CHAPTER IX.

General Mina proceeds to the fort of Los Remedios—Arrival of some of the fugitives there from Sombrero—Description of the fort of Los Remedios, or San Gregorio—Advance of Liñan against the fort—Mina marches out, with nine hundred men—Description of these troops—A reflection of great importance to the United States—Meeting of the general with the remnant of his division, near the Tlachiquera—Siege laid to Los Remedios—Mina advances against, and takes Biscocho—Execution of the garrison—Advance against, and capture of, San Luis de la Paz—Clemency of Mina towards the garrison—Attack on San Miguel—Retreat therefrom, and arrival at the Valle de Santiago—A description of it—Continuation of events connected with Mina's movements—Disgraceful conduct of Padre Torres—Continuation of events at the fort—Repulse of the enemy—Sortie on one of his batteries—Mina's operations continued—Flight of the patriots from the field at La Caxa—Mina visits Xauxilla, and thence proceeds to the Valle de Santiago—Skirmish with Orrantia, and Mina's arrival at La Caxa.

BAFFLED in every effort to succour Sombrero, Mina remained for several days in the mountains in its neighbourhood, with a small body of cavalry. Having sent several messages to Padre Torres, to urge him to order up troops for the relief of the fort, or to cover the movements of its garrison, but receiving only trifling and evasive answers, he resolved to repair to the head-quarters of Torres, and there personally incite that chieftain to the performance of his engagements. Taking with him, therefore, an escort of one hundred of the cavalry of Ortiz, he proceeded to Los Remedios, on the 17th, two days prior to the evacuation and fall of Sombrero. The road lay across the plain of Silao. While crossing it, between the town of that name and the Villa de Leon, he encountered

a body of two hundred of the enemy's cavalry. Mina, with his usual gallantry and skill, led his men into action, and in a few minutes put the enemy to flight, with some loss. They lost their commander, who was dragged off his horse by a *lazo*,* and killed.

Mina, upon his arrival at Los Remedios, found Padre Torres assiduously engaged in strengthening his position, in victualling it, and making every preparation against the siege which he anticipated would be laid to it, after the reduction of Sombrero. He had taken none of the steps that he had promised, and which he ought to have taken, to afford assistance to Sombrero. Under the direction of Mina, the aid he could have given might have prevented the accomplishment of the plans of the enemy, and might probably have led to their destruction. At the pressing solicitations of Mina, Torres issued an order to some of his commandants to repair as soon as possible with their troops to Los Remedios; but

* Lazo is the name of the rope, for the use of which the Spanish Americans are so justly celebrated. In rustic life, it is usually applied to the purpose of catching the stock of various kinds on a farm. A child of five or six years old, commences his experiments with a piece of packthread, and exercises his ingenuity on the poultry about the house: afterwards, he attacks the pigs; and as he grows up, he ventures to throw his lazo upon calves and colts; and thus, by the time he arrives at manhood, he has learned to use it with astonishing precision. It is a well made rope, of about an inch in circumference, and in length from ten to fifteen yards.

Wild cattle are caught by peasants, mounted on horses trained for that express purpose; and, to be broken and trained to it, is one of the important requisites of a Mexican horse. Since the revolution, the lazo has been often resorted to, among a flying enemy. An expert thrower will strike his object almost to a certainty, at a distance of from eight to ten yards. The instant a horse trained to the service, finds that the rope has taken, he will suddenly stop, although at full speed; then wheeling on his haunches, sets off in a full gallop in the opposite direction. The effect is irresistible. The man is instantly brought to the ground. If it be upon cattle that the lazo is thrown, the flight of the animal is instantly arrested; and he is obliged to follow the horse, or choke. With the greatest ease, a peasant will throw the lazo round the horns or legs of a bull, and thus keep the wildest and most vicious animal in subjection, without losing his seat. The constant use of the lazo, from early infancy, can alone account for the extraordinary dexterity he displays in casting it.

alas! this order was issued too late to be of use to Sombrero. For while they were collecting, advices of the disaster of the fort, reached Los Remedios. This event affected the general deeply. It was difficult for him to conceal his conflicting emotions of sorrow, for many of his brave companions, who he presumed had fallen in the struggle; and of indignation, at the shameful neglect of Torres in not having made seasonable exertions in favour of Sombrero. He preserved, however, his usual serenity, well knowing, that either reproaches or despondency must produce bad effects at the then juncture of affairs.

A few of Mina's officers and men reached Los Remedios, and from them he obtained details of the disaster that had befallen them; but of the extent of the loss he was still uninformed. He despatched several persons to seek out the foreigners, and conduct them to him. Thirty-one only were found; but, nevertheless, Mina still indulged the hope, that as the sally had been effected at night by the barranca, the rest of the troops might have gained the mountains near Sombrero, where they would be taken care of by the cavalry of Ortiz.

Advices also reached the fort, that Liñan, flushed with his late success, was advancing with reenforcements against Los Remedios. This movement of his was anticipated, but it was likewise supposed that it would be the close of his career. This opinion was founded upon the strength of the fort, and the arrangements made for harassing the enemy.

The fort of Los Remedios, or as it is called by the royalists, *San Gregorio*, was situated on a lofty, though not extensive range of mountains, rising abruptly out of the delightful plains of Penjamo and Silao, in the province of Guanaxuato; being distant from the city of that name south-south-west about twelve leagues, from Sombrero south about eighteen, and from Penjamo east-north-east four leagues. From the plain, the road wound up the declivities of the mountain, (and in some places it was remarkably steep) by a ridge, for a distance of nearly two miles to the highest elevation of the fort called Tepeaca. From that point the hill again descended, widening a considerable distance into the heart of the mountain, to

the extremity of the fort which was denominated Pansacola. The ascent was not fortified either by nature or art until arriving at a place called *La Cueva*, at about one-third of its height from the plain; whence the road continued, by a difficult, narrow, and, in places, very steep ridge, up to Tepeaca. On the left of La Cueva, the ridge was skirted by a tremendous precipice of from one to two hundred feet perpendicular height; which continued on that side of the fort, with little variation, to Pansacola. On the right of La Cueva, the ridge was likewise bounded by a precipice, to within a few paces of a small work called Santa Rosalia. From the termination of this precipice, a wall of three feet in thickness extended up to Tepeaca. Between these two points the ascent of the barranca was easy, and from thence to Pansacola, it was naturally defended by a continuation of bold, elevated, and broken ground. At this place there was a small passage into the fort, but the precipices made the access to it very dangerous. In short, the whole of the fort, with the exception of the small entrance at Pansacola, and that part on the right of the road ascending to Tepeaca, in the vicinity of the work of Santa Rosalia, was surrounded by a continuance of awful precipices, forming barrancas immensely deep, and from one to three hundred yards in width; and it was at these places only, or at the gate at La Cueva that an entrance could possibly be gained into the fort. At La Cueva, where the ridge ascending into the fort was only thirty feet in breadth, a traverse wall was thrown up on which were mounted two guns. The work next above La Cueva was a small half-moon battery of one gun called Santa Rosalia, which raked the wall up to the next battery called La Libertad. This was a work of two guns, which enfiladed the space down to Santa Rosalia. Above La Libertad was a small one gun battery, and above it Santa Barbara, a battery of two guns, which commanded the others; while Tepeaca, mounting two guns, crowned the whole, commanding the barranca, and the heights on its opposite side; but, from its great elevation, it did not command the works of the fort. Across the only weak part of Pansacola a breastwork was thrown up, merely

to cover infantry, as the difficulties of its approach rendered it secure, if defended by a few steady troops.

One height, in front of Pansacola, commanded the fort, and likewise a hill, opposite to Tepeaca; but, from the difficulty of ascending the latter, owing to its extraordinary steepness, Torres, and colonel Noboa who had examined it, considered it was impossible to transport artillery to that summit. In fact, the strength of this fort, whose natural advantages were so much improved by art, seemed to warrant the opinion, that, protected by a garrison of resolute men, it would be impregnable.

Within the fort, near Pansacola, was a well affording a constant supply of water that had never yet been found deficient even in seasons of drought; there was likewise a large rivulet which ran through the barranca on the left of the fort, and washed the feet of the precipices. This stream, during the rainy season, and for two or three months afterwards, yielded abundance of water. It was therefore deemed impracticable to deprive the garrison of a supply of water. The fort was victualled with *twenty thousand fanegas* (about one and a half bushel English measure to the fanega) of *Indian corn*, *ten thousand* of *wheat*, a large quantity of flour, *six hundred head of cattle*, *two thousand sheep or goats*, and *three hundred large hogs*. The supply of ammunition was considerable, besides a quantity of nitre, sulphur, iron, copper, and lead. The garrison of the fort consisted of about fifteen hundred troops, of whom three hundred had been trained for infantry by colonel Noboa, and were under tolerable discipline. The rest of the troops formed a motly group, undisciplined, but brave.

When Mina arrived at the fort, its works were in many parts defective; but, by the exertions of his officers, and fourteen hundred peasantry who were kept there for that duty, they were placed in a more perfect order. The whole number of persons in the fort, including the peasantry, women and children, was about three thousand.

As the enemy could not succeed in their attempts to carry Sombrero by assault, it was presumable they could never so

carry the fort of Los Remedios, since the latter presented so many more obstacles to such an endeavour, than the former. To attempt to reduce it by famine was considered as preposterous, as it would consume much more time than the enemy could devote to such an operation. In short, the fort was deemed capable of withstanding a siege of at least twelve months.

We have been thus particular in describing the fort of Los Remedios, in order to show that if Torres had been a man possessing even true patriotism, without military discernment, and had acted with zeal and good faith towards Mina, he would have advised the latter to have repaired with all his officers and men to Los Remedios, there to have concentrated their forces, and formed their plan of future operations. Instead of doing this, Torres induced Mina to remain at Sombrero, by deluding him with hollow promises of supplies of provisions and troops, until his prospects were blasted by the destruction of his division. It is impossible therefore for us not to accuse Torres of treachery or ignorance, and in fact of both, in all his conduct towards Mina. But let us resume our narrative.

It was determined between Torres and Mina, that while the former should remain in defence of the fort, the latter should take the command of a body of cavalry, for the purpose of harassing the enemy, by infesting the roads, and preventing supplies from reaching them. Meanwhile, Liñan was enabled, in consequence of the severe blow which he had struck at Sombrero, to advance, with a strong reenforcement, against Los Remedios; and on the 27th, a division of his army made its appearance before that place.

Mina thereon withdrew from the fort with nine hundred cavalry, with the view already stated. He wished to take with him all his officers, but at the earnest solicitation of Torres, who considered them of the highest importance for the defence of the fort, he left the whole behind him, with the exception of his aid de camp. It is true, that these officers were of essential consequence, for the defence of the fort, but the loss to Mina was most serious; for had he taken them with him, there would have been more likelihood of his accomplishing his views, than when he was dependent

upon men among the patriot officers, whose characters and abilities he had yet to ascertain. Perhaps there is no circumstance in Mina's career, that displays more clearly his generous and magnanimous disposition, than his thus yielding to the importunities of Torres, after the shameful manner in which the latter had neglected him at Sombrero. He was now to take the field with a body of irregular troops, without even the semblance of discipline, and without possessing either confidence in him, or in one another, and to enter on an active campaign, which peculiarly required the aid of experienced officers. However, to do his best was all that was left to him; and he consoled himself with the reflection, that his officers would essentially contribute to baffle the enemy's designs upon Los Remedios.

The general marched to the *Tlachiquera*, an hacienda near the cantonment of Ortiz, on the heights of Guanaxuato, ten leagues north of the city of Guanaxuato, by the route of the mountains. He had ordered Don Encarnacion Ortiz to meet him at the hacienda, and there he expected to have found the greater part of the officers and men of his own division, who, he still flattered himself, had survived the disasters of Sombrero.

We have before noticed the loose financial and military regulations prevailing among the patriots, within the command of Padre Torres; but it is now necessary to describe particularly the troops as arrayed under the orders of Mina, to demonstrate the great disadvantages he was obliged to contend against.

In the early stages of the revolution, it will have been perceived by our former statements, that there were periods at which several divisions had attained to a considerable degree of discipline and regularity, under Morelos, Matamoros, the Rayons, Teran, Victoria, and other distinguished patriot officers; but, from the want of a cordial understanding among those chiefs, the cause of the republic had retrograded, as we have already noted.

In the latter stages of the revolution, capable and experienced men were scarce; there was no opportunity for selection; the

commandants were not only illiterate men, but unfortunately men who entered into the cause of their country, as into an adventure or speculation, and who made their own convenience or personal views paramount the success of the revolution, or the interests of their country.

The funds which ought to have been appropriated for the pay and equipment of their troops, were absorbed and squandered by the commandants and their satellites. With no check upon their cupidity, they enriched themselves with impunity. The troops were allowed to live at their respective homes, and were never called together but on a pressing emergency. When they did assemble, each man was clothed as suited his particular taste or circumstances. The soldier received no pay, unless in active service, and then it was only two reals per day, out of which he supported himself. On Sunday they would assemble at a pueblo, for the double purpose of hearing mass, and of receiving, when the commanders chose to be in funds to supply them, a hat, or shirt, and sometimes a dollar or two, not on the score of pay of which no rolls were kept, but as a gracious donation. Beyond this they were seldom supplied; in short, they were generally to be seen in their shirt sleeves, covered with a mangas or a blanket. The only exception to this description were the escoltas (escorts) of the commandants, consisting of from ten to fifty men, agreeably to the means and consequence of the commandants. These were picked men, who had distinguished themselves for courage. They were well dressed, according to the taste of the commandant; were mounted on excellent horses, and were generally well armed; they acted as a body guard to the commandant, with whom they fled when it became necessary.

The whole of the troops, with the exception of those in the forts, were cavalry, a horse being given to each man, which he was obliged to protect from the enemy. Living at their respective houses, they were constantly on the alert, and on the approach of the enemy, instead of uniting for common defence, each man was provident for his own safety. The commandants of the districts asserted, that this was the only

way to save their men, as the incursions of the enemy would nor permit them to be embodied in troops or squadrons. This system, it is true, had in some degree become necessary; but it was a fatal necessity, created by the vicious character of the commandants themselves, who amassed and dissipated the resources of the country, for their own personal gratifications, in place of devoting them to clothing and subsisting a respectable body of troops.

Whenever their soldiers were to be collected, it was usually accomplished, by despatching persons around the country, with orders for them to repair to an appointed rendezvous, which they obeyed at their pleasure. The men generally appointed their own officers, with the exception of the commandants of the district, and it was not uncommon to see captains, majors, colonels, and brigadiers, who had once been field labourers, mayor domos, or arrieros, (muleteers.) Few of them could read or write, and none of them had any pretensions to military knowledge of any kind. They had been chosen by their companions for personal intrepidity and activity, qualities, in their estimation, of primary importance; and which the most of them possessed in an eminent degree. It is hence obvious, that no discipline nor military arrangements could exist among such troops and officers. Incapable of forming in line with precision, unaccustomed to any sort of uniformity in the language of command, or the practice of even reducing or forming column, they were no more than a disunited mob, destitute alike of the knowledge of arriving at, and the sense of the importance of, compactness and unity of action. The confidence which a disciplined soldier places in the support of his companions, the result of a simultaneous motion at command, was unknown to them. But, notwithstanding all these defects, their natural bravery enabled them occasionally to perform most daring exploits. They charged desperately, in loose and broken masses; and, if they succeeded in piercing the enemy's line, made great havoc; but if checked, they broke. It was in vain to attempt to rally them. Like Scythians, they came down in a hail storm, and retired in a cloud, each man seeking his safety in flight, not like disciplined

troops when broken, to rally and form at some convenient position, but to save themselves altogether. In these scenes, the flying soldiers, and particularly the officers, frequently gave proofs of great personal valour and presence of mind.

The Mexican, mounted on his horse on whose speed and activity he can rely, places the most unbounded confidence in him. Neither showers of balls nor the numbers of his opponents dismay him. The officers dash in among the enemy, and, perfectly regardless how their men act, seem only intent on setting them an example of courage. When compelled to retreat before superior numbers, the Mexican, instead of jading his favourite horse, proportions his flight to the speed of his pursuers; and if he perceive one or two of the enemy detached from their main body, he will face round and give them battle in presence of the rest. In short, we know, from frequent personal observation, that no men possess more innate courage than the Mexican Creole. He has every necessary ingredient to form the soldier; and, as an individual, seated on his usually high spirited horse, with his sword and lance, is as formidable an opponent as any in the world. But for want of discipline and military regulation, the Creoles are of little use when embodied, and can easily be put to the rout. Hence the royalists, whose troops are composed of artillery and trained infantry, besides cavalry, have been enabled to gain advantages over them; and more especially at the period of which we are now treating, when the destinies of the republic were in the hands of such men as Padre Torres and his commandants.

This description of the Creoles is not peculiar to those of Mexico; but may with a little modification be considered, we think, as a correct one of those of all the Spanish settlements on the American continent. The natural qualities of this race, their intrepidity, their capacity to endure hardships and privations, their sobriety, their self possession, and their abstemiousness, are qualities so well calculated for military enterprise, that the intelligent reader will at once perceive that discipline alone is necessary to render them, in their own country and climate, the most formidable and effective soldiers.

Shall this fine race of people become free and independent, and allies of the republic of the United States, or are they to become like the Asiatics, in circumstances nearly similar, the subjugators of their own country under European discipline, and the terror and scourge of adjacent countries? Who can foresee what might be accomplished by two hundred thousand Mexican Creoles, versed in the tactics of this day, with ambitious European leaders? This is a subject which opens a wide field for reflection, and particularly merits the regard of the American statesman.

The equipments of the patriots have already been briefly noticed. Their ammunition was in general of their own manufacture. The physical resources of the country are superabundant, with any common management. For Mexico abounds with salt petre: the craters of her volcanoes yield sulphur; while the forests afford charcoal. Thus, although the manufacture be rude, they can make quantities of powder. Flints are found in the rivulets of the mountains; and from the bowels of the latter are extracted lead, copper and iron, as well as gold and silver. They have thus the means within themselves of carrying on war; but the want of artists and mechanics renders their productions of but little use to them.

The body of nine hundred cavalry, which was placed under Mina's command, was composed of men such as we have described, who may be properly styled Mexican Cossacks. Hosts of officers were among them: a corps of two hundred and fifty men would be commanded by brigadiers, or colonels; colonels again would command a body of fifty men. The subalterns were numerous; in one body of two hundred and fifty men, commanded by a brigadier, there were *above eighteen captains*. Different descriptions of arms were found in the same company; and a just subordination was unknown among them.

With such troops was Mina now destined to act. Almost any other man would have been filled with desponding apprehensions, under such circumstances. But, although he was aware of their want of discipline, yet as he had seen the same description of troops behave well in the affair of San Juan de los Llanos, and as in the recent attack on the enemy's cavalry

between Leon and Silao, he had been an eyewitness of their valour, he imagined that by perseverance he should be able to remedy all their deficiencies.

The general, with great pains and patience formed his nine hundred men into three squadrons; the carabineers formed the vanguard; the centre was composed of lancers, and the rear guard of carabineers; he assigned commanding officers to each division; and contemplated establishing a Guard of Honour from his supernumerary officers, on the model of his old guard, but he did not accomplish it.

The captain general Don José Maria Liceaga, whom we have before mentioned, had joined Mina. His advice and information were of great importance. The patriots however viewed Liceaga with a jealous eye. He had become unpopular by endeavouring to adhere to a system of strict discipline, as is always the case where discipline is neither established nor its advantages appreciated.

On the morning of the 30th Mina was near the Tlachiquera; there he met Ortiz, with nineteen of the division, who had escaped from Sombrero. There were six officers among the nineteen men. The moment the general saw them, he put spurs to his horse, and flew to receive them. He cordially gave them a soldier's embrace, and with great eagerness asked; "Where are the rest?" He was answered; "We are all that are left." The blow was severe: his countenance depicted the anguish of his heart; and placing his leg across the pummel of his saddle, he reclined his head on his hand. His fine eye glistened with the warrior's tear of sensibility, but quickly recovering himself, his countenance resumed its accustomed serenity. The general retained four officers and six soldiers of the nineteen men, and ordered the rest to take commands under Ortiz.

In the meantime the army of Liñan had invested the fort, and the formal siege of Los Remedios commenced on the 31st of August. The barrancas and precipices which encircled the fort, were alike important to defend the besiegers against sallies, and the besieged against assaults. The former posted their infantry on positions with one exception inaccessible to

assault, on the opposite side of the barrancas, and in front of the works of the fort.

The enemy, not satisfied with occupying naturally impregnable holds, intrenched themselves wherever they planted their batteries. Their front was protected against the assaults of the besieged, by insurmountable precipices; and their rear was secured against the movements of Mina, as it was impossible for cavalry to ascend those heights. The grand encampment of the enemy was formed in the plain, immediately at the foot of the ascent to the entrance of the fort. From this position, they could more easily reenforce their works around the fort; thence they could cover them from Mina's attacks, and besides prevent the escape of the garrison by that passage. The only possible way left for escape, was by Pansacola. The head-quarters of Liñan were placed on the summit, on the opposite side of the barranca, directly facing Tepeaca. After the enemy had broken ground in front, they had, by incredible labour, drawn up cannon, and planted on the summit a battery of three guns and two howitzers. This battery, being within a short range of Tepeaca, severely annoyed that position; but, from its great elevation, could not fire into the other works. It was an annoyance not anticipated by the besieged, as they had calculated that it was impracticable to raise cannon to that spot. The enemy, however, after some time, made an excavation in the side of the precipice, below the above work, sufficient to mount one gun, from which they effectually raked the works of the fort, from Tepeaca down to Santa Rosalia. On the side of the barranca, fronting the works of Santa Rosalia and La Libertad, the enemy had erected two batteries, the one commanding the other, which threw shot into the works of the besieged, from the distance of half musket shot. In the first work of the enemy were planted three pieces of heavy artillery; in the second, two pieces. In the rear of the latter, on a small table land, was an intrenched camp, with one piece of artillery, and likewise naturally well defended. On a commanding height, in the rear of the whole, were planted a twelve pound battering gun and a howitzer. From this position, the whole of that part of Los Remedios, from La Cueva up to

Tepeaca, was much annoyed. Opposite the weak part of Pansacola, another encampment was formed, and a battery of two pieces of artillery and two howitzers was there opened. On the left of La Cueva, three pieces of artillery and two howitzers were subsequently planted in battery, which fired into the rear of that work. Between their several positions, on every place where escape was in any way practicable, were posted intrenched picquets, with the view also of cutting off from the fort all possible external communication. A corp of eight hundred well equipped infantry and cavalry, under the command of Don Francisco de Orrantia, was ordered to observe the movements of Mina.

Thus had the enemy, with extraordinary trouble and skill, completed a line of attack, which effectually hemmed in the garrison, and menaced the works, of Los Remedios. We have already described the defences of the fort; and, although at the time the siege was commenced many parts of the works were defective, yet, by the labour of the peasantry, and the skill and activity of Mina's officers, they were daily improved and strengthened.

Mina advanced from the Tlachiquera to the cantonment of Don Encarnacion Ortiz, where he augmented his force with two hundred and fifty of the cavalry of that officer, and marched the same evening. His first great object was to interrupt the enemy's line of communication between the city of Mexico and the northern provinces. By destroying their fortifications in that direction, their convoys would be deprived of their strong places of depot, and consequently would be exposed to the incursions of the patriots of *Xalpa*, who were in strong bodies about Queretaro, and on that road. Thus, also, supplies for the besieging army at Remedios would be rendered precarious.

Mina advanced rapidly, the first night of his march; and, at sun-rise next morning, came up to a fortified hacienda, called *Biscocho*. Its defences were insignificant. The garrison took possession of the church, and from the top and steeple fired on the assailants. Mina sent a summons, demanding their immediate surrender. A refusal having been returned, the place

was attacked, and after a short conflict, carried. The garrison were made prisoners, with the exception of the commandant, who had prudently decamped on the first appearance of Mina's troops. The recollection of the dreadful massacre at Sombrero, the clamours of Mina's surviving companions, and the rage of his whole division, now operated on his feelings; and, for the first time, he listened to the cries of revenge. Thirty-one of the garrison were taken out, and shot. The mere mention, a few weeks before, of such a sacrifice of prisoners, would have filled the general, as well as his troops, with horror; but the wanton barbarity of the royalists rendered it necessary to repress the feelings of humanity. The extension of mercy to an enemy who spurned at every principle of civilized warfare, had become impolitic and preposterous; and it was now necessary to repel acts of barbarism, by measures of just retaliation. The remains of Mina's division vowed to sacrifice every royalist taken in arms, until they had expiated the blood of their murdered companions, or until the enemy should refrain from immolating their prisoners in cold blood. It was not, however, Mina's intention to cherish these views of retaliation. On the occasion in question, he permitted the principle to be acted upon; but it is the only act, bearing the apparent impress of cruelty or severity, with which his name can be charged.

After ordering the hacienda to be burned, to prevent its being immediately re-occupied by the enemy, and driving off the cattle, the general, next morning, continued his march towards *San Luis de la Paz;* a pueblo of some importance, situated about fourteen leagues to the eastward of Guanaxuato. San Luis de la Paz had suffered much during the revolution, and many of its principal edifices were in ruins. It was occupied by a division of the enemy, consisting of a hundred infantry, aided by some of the male population of the place. On Mina's approach, the enemy had ordered them to repair to the fortifications, and had made preparations for resistance. The church, the parsonage house which joined it, and the cemetery, were the chief places of defence. The former was in itself a strong hold; while the latter was surrounded

by a wall pierced with loop holes, outside of which was a dry ditch, crossed by a drawbridge, affording the only approach to the church. Its garrison, sheltered by the wall, gave great annoyance through the loop holes, and every place around their little work was commanded by infantry posted on the top of the church and in the belfry, the openings of which had been filled up with bricks, sufficient to protect the men.

The garrison, supposing that Mina would be repulsed, with the same ease with which the attacks of other patriot commanders had always been foiled, had been careless in supplying the place with provisions; but they had water from a fountain at the parsonage house. Against organized troops this place could not have been defended; and if Mina had then had with him his former little band of foreigners, he would have carried it in a few minutes by storm. But he now found that the patriot troops, whom he had beheld in combats in plains against the enemy's cavalry and infantry acting with the greatest gallantry, when brought to scale walls, or to resist infantry posted behind a fortified place, were totally ineffective.

The general summoned the commander of the garrison to surrender. A refusal having been returned, Mina surrounded the place, so as effectually to prevent the escape of the garrison. He determined on making an experiment to carry it by assault, particularly as some ruins of houses stood within twenty paces of the drawbridge. He made the necessary dispositions, but soon perceived that is was difficult to draw his soldiers from their coverts among the ruined houses. In vain he tried to make them advance in a compact body. They scattered and fell back before the fire of the infantry of the garrison. Some intrepid officers and men of the storming parties boldly advanced, but not being properly supported, their lives were sacrificed to their gallantry. The general was deeply mortified. He resolved, however, to reduce the place by famine, in case he could not otherwise effect it. The patriots at times would seem anxious to renew the attack, and the general, enlivened, would again lead them on: but it was in vain; they invariably shrunk back, at the very critical moment when firmness was necessary. Various plans were now devised to destroy the

drawbridge, but none of the troops could be prevailed upon to carry them into execution. Bundles of faggots were prepared to be thrown into the ditch to burn it down: but the few bundles, which some spirited volunteers carried to the spot, were not sufficient to accomplish the object. The drawbridge was suspended only by strong leather thongs. To cut these, was one plan; and several bold attempts were ineffectually made to reach them. On one of those occasions of fitful animation among his troops, Mina ordered one of his officers, captain Perrier, to head the storming party. This brave fellow found no difficulty in scaling the wall, and, supposing his troops would follow him, leaped in among the enemy; but, on turning round, he found himself alone,—abandoned at a moment when an easy victory might have been gained. The gallant captain, with great exertions, made his escape back, but was severely wounded.

Mina, after spending four days in these abortive attempts at assault, resorted to sapping and running a covered way from the ruins of the houses, to the drawbridge; which he accomplished, and the bridge was then cut down. The garrison at once surrendered, without further opposition, and called for quarter. The scenes of Sombrero were still fresh in the recollection of his troops; they demanded revenge, and reminded the general of their recent oath not to spare a royalist taken in arms. But the merciful disposition of Mina now displayed itself. He interposed between the conquerors and the vanquished, and succeeded in preventing an indiscriminate slaughter of the prisoners; but, to appease the patriots, he consented to make an example of three persons: the commander of the place; that of Biscocho, who was found here; and a European soldier. They were shot. The greater part of the prisoners expressed a desire to join Mina's banners; and the rest were set at liberty.

The fortifications of San Luis were demolished, as it was impossible to attempt to hold it against a regular siege. Colonel Gonzales, in whose district it lay, a celebrated warrior of the troops of Xalpa, was left in command of the place, to watch the movements of the enemy. Mina then advanced

against *San Miguel el Grande*, a town of considerable importance, fourteen leagues south-east of Guanaxuato. While making preparations for its capture, which, from its position, he had every ground to calculate upon, he received advice that a very strong body of the enemy were advancing for its defence; he therefore considered it prudent to draw off his troops and retreat. He now saw the misfortune of having occupied so much time in the reduction of San Luis de la Paz. If he had proceeded to San Miguel el Grande three days sooner, he could have taken the place. Immense resources of every kind would have been there acquired; he would have completed his plan of cutting off the enemy's chain of communications; and the war might have assumed a new character. But to fail, where success was justly anticipated, is an event incident to the species of warfare in which he was then engaged. It is ever to be regretted that he was frustrated in the prosecution of his plan.

Mina being thus under the necessity of abandoning his design upon San Miguel, proceeded to the Valle de Santiago, a place of some importance, situated on the south side of the river of that name, sixteen leagues south of Guanaxuato. The Valle de Santiago, whose destruction by Torres has been before noticed, was one of the few towns which remained in the possession of the patriots. When Mina entered it, he found it in ruins; the churches alone remaining uninjured. A considerable population, among whom were some very respectable families, still dwelt amidst this scene of desolation, in huts erected on the sites of their former handsome edifices. The inhabitants of the Valle de Santiago, animated by their hostility to Spanish authority, scarcely appeared to regret that their comforts had been sacrificed at the shrine of liberty. Enthusiastically devoted to the cause of their country, they had always rejected with scorn every overture of the royalists to seduce them. Most tenderly did they cherish the thought of the independence of their country,—most faithfully did they cling to her through the dark night of her misfortunes; and, finally, sealed their attachment to her, by deserting the place

of their nativity, when it subsequently fell into the hands of the enemy.

The district in which it is situated is not extensive; but valuable from possessing a soil more productive, perhaps, than that of any other part of the kingdom. It enjoyed, at that time, a great commerce; the annual revenue of the comandancia being one hundred and twenty thousand dollars. *Don Lucas Flores*, the commandant, was a hardy, intrepid man, and, as a guerilla chief, had been distinguished by his enterprise. Being so destitute of education, as to be unable to write his own name, the regulation of the finances was committed to a treasurer. The principal care of this man was directed to the enrichment of himself; so that the revenue of this important district disappeared, and the public coffers were kept empty.

Don Lucas was one of the confederated commandants under Padre Torres. Operated upon by the bad example of his chief, he became dissipated and inactive, and lost his popularity by the commission of arbitrary and vexatious acts. It was in the power of Don Lucas, by cordially co-operating with Mina, to have rendered the most essential service to the common cause. He had secreted upwards of fifteen hundred stand of excellent arms, which he had taken from the enemy in different actions; these, with the resources of his comandancia, properly applied, would have been all important at that juncture. We believe that he was sincerely attached to his country, but from his great regard for Torres, or from pride, ignorance, or some other motive, his conduct towards Mina was characterized by reserve. Don Lucas commanded a body of brave troops—than whom none had displayed more gallantry in the irregular conflicts with the enemy's cavalry. But, as was usual, the escort of the commandant was the only portion of them properly equipped. Gaming and disorderly conduct of every kind, predominated among them, as it unfortunately did among all the revolutionary troops.

Mina had selected the Valle de Santiago for his head-quarters, on account of its position, its abundant resources for the

supply of his troops, and the confidence he reposed in the patriotism of its inhabitants. On entering the town, the respectable inhabitants received him in the most affectionate and enthusiastic manner, conducting him to the church amidst a concourse of people. A *Te Deum* was chaunted, and every eye beamed with satisfaction at beholding Mina. The troops encamped near the town; where provisions and pay were furnished them by the comandancia and by patriotic individuals.

During his stay in the Valle de Santiago, Mina attempted to remedy the want of discipline among his troops. But the officers were so illiterate, and so entirely strangers to military subordination, that he could accomplish but little in the short time he was among them. A total change of system, and much time were requisite to eradicate their pernicious habits, and establish discipline. To change or instruct the officers, to regulate anew the finances, to repress the excesses of anarchy and establish order and subordination, were objects to be executed only by degrees. Besides, had Mina attempted to introduce the change at once, his measures would have been viewed as harsh and despotic, and he would have created enemies among those whose good will at that crisis was so important to him. Under these circumstances, there remained no alternative for him but to make the best use of the means which were presented to him, and to adopt such a system of tactics as was best suited to troops undisciplined, and unacquainted with the importance of military subjection, until time and events should enable him gradually to effect a change. He flattered himself that this would be more speedily accomplished, could he only succeed in raising the siege of Los Remedios.

While waiting for reenforcements, he advanced with a select corps to attack a fortified hacienda, called La Sanja, a few leagues distant from the Valle de Santiago. This position is strong, and being in a low situation near the lake of Jurida, the country around it is capable of being inundated at pleasure. It is likewise encompassed by broad and deep ditches. These

difficulties were not to be surmounted by inexperienced troops, and the attempt to take it by storm proved abortive. He therefore returned to the Valle de Santiago.

After his return, he issued orders to the surrounding commandants, urging them to direct all their exertions to cut up the intercourse by the roads to Los Remedios; pointing that out, as the most effectual measure to defeat the views of the enemy. Having received a small reenforcement of troops, he marched, with nearly one thousand cavalry, to the vicinity of the fort, for the purpose of attacking the enemy, upon the first favourable opportunity. With this view, he proceeded to the hacienda of La Hoÿa.

The enemy, when apprized of his approach, despatched a strong division under the command of Don Francisco de Orrantia, to attack him. The general made his dispositions for battle; but finding, on reconnoitring, that the force consisted of a body of infantry and cavalry against which it would be imprudent to contend, he ordered a retreat. The enemy pursued him to the foot of the mountains near Guanaxuato, where the patriots adopted the usual mode of eluding the enemy, by separating into small detachments, each one following the route to its own comandancia. The general, with a small party, hung on the rear of the enemy, skirmishing with them, until they entered the town of Irapuato. He then proceeded to the Valle de Santiago, and issued orders to the commandants to reassemble their troops as early as possible. The junction of their forces being accomplished, he marched to the plain of Silao, between the place of that name and Los Remedios, where he was reenforced by other divisions of patriots; with one of which came Don Pedro Moreno, the ci-devant commandant of Sombrero. The general's force then amounted to about eleven hundred men, a great proportion of whom were miserably equipped. He menaced the enemy's fortified towns, and, by his rapid and unexpected movements, kept the Baxio in a state of constant alarm, thereby preventing supplies from reaching the besieging army at Los Remedios; while Orrantia, with a division of picked troops, followed the movements of

Mina, but did not attempt to attack him. The royalists generally bivouaced in the same positions which Mina had occupied on the preceding night.

Mina was in close correspondence with some of the leading inhabitants of the enemy's towns; and, as he found that the enemy at Los Remedios drew their principal supplies from the city of Guanaxuato, he considered its capture as the most effectual means of cutting them off, and thus raising the siege of the fort. Mina well knew the strength of Liñan's position at Los Remedios. He was aware of the deficiency of discipline among the patriot troops; and that the numerical force of the enemy was nearly seven times greater than his own, consisting principally of European veterans, with their best cavalry, adapted to the nature and circumstances of the country. To attack the encampment of Liñan, therefore, in the plain at the foot of the hill of Los Remedios, under such circumstances, would have been a disregard of all military principles; it would have been rashness in the extreme; and, much as Mina liked dashing operations, he was too prudent to attempt to perform them, with such troops as those then under his command. To attack the enemy's intrenchments around the fort, was impracticable. Besides, could he have ascended the heights with cavalry, he had seen enough to convince him that the patriot troops were not capable of assaulting by escalade. These considerations united in confirming his purpose; and, having received the most flattering assurances of support from some of the most respectable citizens of Guanaxuato, he decided on the attack of that city.

Mina communicated these intentions to Padre Torres, by couriers. But this man, either from ignorance, or from the apprehension of the consequences that would arise in favour of Mina, if the latter should take Guanaxuato, opposed the plan; insisting that the only possible mode of relieving the fort was by attacking the besiegers. In vain did the general represent to him the advantages that must arise from the capture of Guanaxuato, and the disadvantages attendant upon attacking the besiegers, from the relative strength and composition of the adverse forces; and that therefore the only effective blow which

could be struck against the enemy, would be the capture of Guanaxuato. Torres at length threw off all reserve; he not only disapproved of Mina's plan, but resorted to the disgraceful step of sending an order to Don Lucas Flores, and to others of the commandants, to put their *best troops under Mina's command only in the event of his attacking the enemy at the fort; otherwise, that they must afford him only partial succours, of the worst of their troops.* This was an unexpected blow to Mina. He could scarcely repress his indignation at the baseness of Torres; but it was not the moment to indulge in expressions of displeasure, and he therefore strove to accommodate himself to circumstances, which it was not in his power to resist or to modify.

Mina continued his operations by a system of guerilla warfare in the Baxio, and actually reduced the enemy to so great a degree of want, that desertions from their ranks commenced. A sergeant and two men, of the European regiment of Fernando 7°, presented themselves to Mina in the hacienda de Burras, five leagues from Guanaxuato. From these men he learned that the enemy had been compelled to subsist chiefly upon the green corn, which their cavalry brought in from the neighbouring ranchos; that their troops received no pay; and that discontent was becoming general. They also stated, that he might expect soon to be joined by a number of deserters; that many soldiers, before that time, would have passed over to the patriot standard, had it not been from an apprehension of being put to death by some roving band of patriots, before they could reach Mina.

During these operations of Mina in the Baxio, the enemy was carrying on the siege of Los Remedios with vigour. They had already been employed twenty days in throwing up intrenchments, to protect themselves from the assaults which they feared Mina might attempt to make on them. The lines of approach, for the reduction of the fort, were daily becoming more formidable.

The garrison, in the meantime, was not inactive. Under the direction of Mina's officers, the curtain, if it may be so termed, and the works extending from Santa Rosalia to Tepe-

aca, had been nearly completed; and to their unintermitted exertions was Padre Torres wholly indebted for the fort's being placed in a state capable of making so gallant a resistance, against an enemy so much more numerous, and so far superior in the character of his troops, and in artillery.

From the opposite heights, which were within musket-shot, the enemy frequently held conversations with the besieged, and vauntingly expressed their confidence of gaining possession of the fort by storm, at the very first attempt. Accordingly, about the 20th of September, they advanced in three columns, and assaulted the fort at the points of Pansacola and Tepeaca; but directed their principal efforts against a part of the curtain which was then unfinished. The battery of La Libertad, which had been planned by Mina, and which his officers had laboured to complete, was also unfinished. They advanced against each point simultaneously, and upon the opening in the curtain, in admirable order; but they were received in a manner which they expected not. After an inveterate conflict of three hours, finding their attempts to enter the fort were abortive, they were compelled to retire after suffering very severely. Liñan, being thus disappointed in carrying Los Remedios on the first assault, determined to open a mine under the work at Tepeaca. In this effort he also failed; twice was he disappointed in his attempts to destroy the battery by explosion. Could he have accomplished that object, the fort must have fallen into his possession, as Tepeaca commanded the whole line of works. But the engineers of Liñan must have been deficient of skill; for, on springing the mine, the explosion each time issued by the mouth of the gallery, killing and wounding many of the miners. This, conjoined with the frequent sorties from the fort on the mining parties, at length compelled the enemy to abandon the project of undermining it.

Meanwhile, they had erected batteries in front of that of La Libertad. From these they opened a heavy fire, which seriously injured the curtain and works generally. As Liñan had been foiled in his attempts to blow up Tepeaca, he determined, once more, to resort to open assault. Having succeed-

ed in making a breach in the curtain, below Santa Rosalia, the enemy prepared to storm it, making, at the same time, judicious diversions on Pansacola and Tepeaca. The design of the enemy being soon perceived, the gun from Santa Rosalia was carried down and planted in the breach, supported by infantry, and peasantry armed with missile weapons. A strong column of European infantry moving up to the breach, under cover of a fire from their works, advanced intrepidly to within a few paces of it, when they were received with so much spirit that they soon fell back. They rallied and returned to the attack, but on approaching the fatal breach were again repulsed. At the other points of assault they were received with the same gallantry; and, after having suffered a severe loss in each attack, the enemy beat the retreat and retired within their intrenchments.

The garrison, animated by their recent exploits, determined to become the assailants. The batteries opposite to La Libertad had seriously annoyed the besieged; for the superior artillery of the enemy, placed there within short range of the works, did them great injury. The damage committed thereby during the day, was repaired by night with stones and sand bags. But, wearied with the great and repeated fatigue, the garrison resolved to attempt the destruction of the enemy's first battery, on which were mounted three heavy pieces of artillery. This enterprise was to be performed against European troops, strongly intrenched.

A party of two hundred and fifty men was selected for this daring operation, commanded by captains Crocker and Ramsay, and lieutenant Wolfe, three officers of Mina. Lieutenant Wolfe, with a detachment of fifty men, was ordered to gain the rear of the enemy's first work, by a circuitous route, and act simultaneously with the remainder of the party, which was to advance in front. Favoured by the obscurity of the night, the parties gained their positions unobserved by the enemy. Lieutenant Wolfe opened a fire from the rear; and, scarcely had the enemy directed their attention to that point, when the party in front gallantly rushed forward. The enemy, being

in a state of continual alarm of Mina, and not expecting an assault from the besieged, finding themselves attacked in front and rear at the same instant, supposed that the attack in front was in co-operation with that of Mina in the rear. Under this impression, we presume, they discharged a couple of guns loaded with grape shot, at the party in front, but without any effect; and, struck with a panic, exclaiming, *Mina! Mina!* they leaped their works in confusion, and fled to their second battery. The two heaviest guns were spiked, and their limbers destroyed; the work was levelled, and the party retired without the loss or injury of a man. They brought off the third gun from the enemy's works, but could not carry it further than the foot of the barranca, where it was rendered unserviceable and abandoned.

Thus was executed an enterprise entirely unexpected on the part of the enemy, the effect of which on their minds must have been very considerable, however unimportant it may be viewed in relation to the force on either side. The enemy, however, shortly after replaced their artillery, and thenceforward limited their operations to a cannonading and blockade. The damage which their artillery effected on the works of the fort, was speedily repaired by the ordinary means of war. The siege did not excite much uneasiness, for in despite of the enemy's vigilance, some of the brave peasants found their way into the fort almost every night, with powder and other articles. Provisions were abundant in the magazines. The finest fresh bread was daily served out; meat was plenty; and in fact the garrison had not only necessaries but luxuries.

The enemy's situation presented a striking contrast. They had scarcely any other subsistence, than unripe corn, as before mentioned; for Mina had effectually cut off their supplies. All the country, for several miles around Los Remedios, had been deserted by the inhabitants, who had likewise driven off their cattle. The situation of the enemy was soon known to the garrison; and, in order to show them the hopelessness of an attempt to obtain Los Remedios by famine, presents of fresh-baked bread, meat, brandy, and even fruit, were frequently placed at about half way between the hostile works.

The general was still pursuing his guerilla warfare, harassing the enemy incessantly, and cutting off their provisions, with an effect which every day made their situation more critical.

While Mina was marching through the hacienda of La Caxa, on the 10th of October, a peasant brought him the intelligence, that Orrantia was approaching, and was but a short distance in the rear.

Having had some opportunities of instilling a little more confidence in his troops, Mina thought the present a fit occasion to try them in the field, and therefore determined to give battle to Orrantia.

The experiment recently made in attacking fortifications, had convinced him, that they could not be relied upon for such operations; but as his force was then numerically superior to the enemy's, he entertained expectations, that they would feel a confidence in themselves, and that amidst the fortuitous occurrences of an engagement, his experience might enable him to seize upon some advantageous moment to decide the conflict. To succeed in destroying this enemy would be in effect to raise the siege of Los Remedios, as Liñan could not detach from his force such another body of infantry and cavalry, as that of Orrantia's; and Mina would thereby be enabled to prosecute other plans against the enemy with facility, in which he had been hitherto frustrated by the position of Orrantia's division. Mina, it must be acknowledged, was not very sanguine of the result of the battle; but as in war, under such circumstances, delay itself is disadvantageous, and as he hoped, at all events, to occasion a severe loss to the enemy, as well as to give the patriot troops an opportunity to distinguish themselves, he therefore took his determination to await the attack. The hacienda of La Caxa is situated on elevated ground, in a pass between two hills, distant from the enemy's town of Irapuato three leagues. The buildings of the hacienda were strongly fenced in. In front of them extended large plantations of Indian corn, which at that time was in full growth. The whole was enclosed by a very strong wall, with a small gate in one side, through

which lay the road to the hacienda through the corn fields. Immediately contiguous to this wall, on both sides, the ground was laying fallow.

Mina had with him, at this time, about eleven hundred men; but their character as soldiers must be borne in mind: for, in consequence of the disgraceful order issued by Torres, these troops were composed of the most ordinary men of the different comandancias, and many of them only armed with lazos and machetas. Desertion, as might be expected from such troops, was frequent, and from the deficiency of all ideas of discipline, was practised with an impunity the most pernicious, because irremediable. Whenever they were wearied with service, or were anxious to return to their families, they retired in pairs or dozens; and sometimes, at a critical moment, when an action was about taking place, they went off in still more considerable numbers. Mina, at length, finding it indispensable to interpose a check to this practice even at the risk of losing his popularity, issued an order declaring the penalty of death on the deserters. He sentenced to be shot two deserters, one of whom held the rank of a colonel. This act of firmness on the part of Mina, at least put a temporary check on desertion. Another evil had considerably injured the troops; it was a custom they had adopted of permitting females to accompany the expedition. At the time we are speaking of, Ortiz had reenforced Mina with some cavalry, and many of the officers had brought with them their wives. Whether this was from anticipating an attack on the city of Guanaxuato, where the females would expect to come in for a share of the spoil, or from some other cause, is immaterial, but it was the first time that Mina had been encumbered with such auxiliaries, and they were of very serious disadvantage to him on this occasion.

The general, under all these embarrassing circumstances, made his dispositions for action. He posted a picquet at the gate of the enclosure; and, at some distance in the rear, on an elevated position, established his advanced guard, composed of two hundred and fifty men, such as he thought the best adapted for that duty, under the command of a dashing Creole,

nicknamed "*El Giro.*" In the corn field, in front of the hacienda, on each side of the road, he posted the main body, resting obliquely upon it as a centre, and within the fence of the hacienda, was the rear guard of two hundred men, with the women, ammunition, &c.

These dispositions were scarcely made, when the enemy were descried in motion upon the fallow ground before mentioned, outside the fence, where they halted for a considerable time, apparently undecided how to act. Mina, thereupon, having given his instructions to the commander of the main body, proceeded to the advanced post, whence he could better reconnoitre the enemy, and seize upon any opportunity for a favourable movement. At length the enemy attacked and drove in the picquet, and passed within the fence; and again halted on the clear space within it, in close order. Apprehensive of an ambuscade, the enemy threw out some light troops among the corn, but these were soon recalled, and whether or not they were afraid to advance by the high road, we cannot say, but after a considerable time spent in preparation, they filed off to the right, thereby appearing to menace the left of Mina, and turn his flank. In executing this movement, their infantry fell into disorder, and Mina supposing that he could reach them before they could form anew, made a charge on them with the advanced guard. It was executed with spirit; but his distance from the enemy was so great, that they had time to form, and thereby save themselves. Mina, with only two hundred and fifty men, now found himself engaged with the enemy's whole force. In the height of the action, a party of thirty of the enemy's cavalry, having made a circuit, approached the hacienda where the women were placed, who became alarmed, and fled. This created a panic in the rear guard, who took to flight. The main body, seeing the flight of the rear guard, without knowing the cause, likewise broke and dispersed, while Mina, with his little corps, was left to sustain the whole brunt of the action. The enemy's cavalry, seeing the confusion, pursued the fugitives, and the rout became general. Upon this unexpected disaster, no other resource was left to Mina, than to cut his way through the enemy, which he most

gallantly effected, after sustaining some loss. Orrantia then proceeded to the hacienda, where he shot some of the peasantry for not having remained in the place during the action: their houses he gave up to pillage. Mina, with the brave little party who had supported him so well, bivouaced near the scene of action, while Orrantia passed the night at the hacienda, without venturing to attack the general. Next morning, Mina proceeded to a small place, about four leagues off, called *Pueblo Nuevo*, where he found some of the fugitives, but the greater number had crossed the river on whose banks the place stands, and had returned to their respective homes.

In the late affair, the general again experienced the lamentable evil, of the want of discipline, among the patriot troops, and of the fatal consequences of allowing females to accompany them. But he was so highly pleased with the valour and conduct of the advanced party, under his immediate command, that he felt a renewed conviction, that he should be able to produce a considerable reformation among the patriot forces, by their example and success. He was convinced that if the unlooked for panic-terror we have mentioned, had not taken place, and that if his main body had been once closely engaged, the defeat of Orrantia would have been certain, or at the least that he must have been seriously crippled, and compelled to retire.

Despondency under any circumstances formed no part of Mina's character. His first care was therefore to adopt measures the best calculated to remedy the evils by which he was encompassed; and as he knew that it would take a considerable time to reassemble the scattered troops, he resolved, in the interval, to visit Xauxilla, the seat of the patriot government, with which he wished to consult as to his future operations. With this view he selected an escort of twenty men, and dismissed the rest, after despatching orders to the different commandants to assemble with their troops on a certain day at La Caxa. He proceeded in the evening for Xauxilla, and arrived there the next day.

Xauxilla was a small mud fort, the construction of which displayed the exercise of some military science. It was situ-

ated on an island just large enough to contain it, in the lake of Zacapo, a short distance from the village of that name, in the intendancy of Valladolid, about twenty leagues south-west of the Valle de Santiago, and eighteen north-west of the city of Valladolid. It was surrounded by a swamp or pond containing from five to six feet of water in depth, and could only be reached by canoes. Its garrison was composed of one hundred tolerably well disciplined infantry. At this place, the Republican Gazette was printed. There was likewise within the fort an extensive manufactory of powder, whence supplies had been sent to Los Remedios. The members of the government (if it may be so called) received Mina with cordiality. He frankly unfolded to them his plans, particularly that of attacking Guanaxuato. But this plan did not meet with their approbation. They did not believe that it could be accomplished with such troops as could then be placed under Mina's command. They were aware that with undisciplined men, nothing could be effected that would shed a lustre on Mina, or be of essential benefit to their country. They strongly recommended to the general, to withdraw his remaining officers and men from the fort of Los Remedios, the place being impregnable, and well stored with provisions; and there being consequently no apprehensions of its falling into the hands of the enemy, there was no absolute necessity that called for the presence there of Mina's officers.

The members of the government endeavoured to impress upon Mina's mind, the importance of organizing a body of troops, before he should undertake any momentous enterprise, and that, for the accomplishment of that purpose, the country between Xauxilla and the shores of the Pacific ocean was the most proper place, as the enemy there were less numerous than in the Baxio, and the people were universally earnest in the patriot cause; besides, that the fertility of the country yielded ample supplies, and its natural positions afforded complete security. They made use of the most cogent arguments to persuade Mina to adopt this plan: but after giving them all the solidity to which they were entitled, he remained unconvinced of its feasibility. His primary object

was to relieve Los Remedios. Knowing the critical situation to which the enemy were reduced, by the failure of their supplies of provisions, and believing that if the design of compelling Liñan to withdraw from the siege of that fort, by the extremity of hunger, was abandoned, such another opportunity might not again occur, he flattered himself that if he could effect this his favourite point, that the affairs of the revolution would then assume a different aspect. He was, it is true, sensible that full reliance could not be placed upon the troops he commanded, but he thought that if he could obtain fifty infantry from Xauxilla, to be added to a like number from among the prisoners of San Luis de la Paz, whom Ortiz had undertaken to train, that with these, and an overwhelming force of cavalry, he should be able to capture the city of Guanaxuato. Mina likewise informed his counsellors, that his honour was implicated in relieving the fort of Remedios, and that he had also pledged himself to attack Guanaxuato.

The government, on finding his resolution taken, ordered fifty infantry of the fort to march to his place of rendezvous. Although the members of the government much regretted Mina's determination, yet they all admired the generous sentiments by which he was actuated in support of his plan, and earnestly wished him full success.

The general marched from Xauxilla, taking, on his return, a circuitous route through *Puruandiro*, formerly a considerable and rich town, but which, by the mandates of Torres, had been reduced to a heap of ruins, with the usual exception of the churches. It lies about sixteen leagues north of the city of Valladolid, and was at that time in possession of the patriots, who hailed the arrival of Mina among them by illuminations and other public demonstrations of joy. After remaining there two days, for the purpose of procuring some pecuniary aid, to carry into effect his intended object, he proceeded to the Valle de Santiago. He there found a small party of the patriot troops from Xalpa, awaiting his arrival. But he had been in the town only a few minutes, when the approach of a strong body of the enemy was announced from the look-out posts on the heights. It was the division of Orrantia. Mina,

who entertained the most sovereign contempt for Orrantia, as a military man, could not endure the thought of making a passive retreat, although he knew the enemy's superior numbers. He therefore placed his few men in ambush, in the corn that was growing in the vicinity of the place, and close to the road by which he presumed the enemy would pursue him; intending, if their cavalry only advanced in pursuit of him, to draw them into the ambuscade, in which case the destruction of a portion of them was certain. Orrantia, having entered the town, and receiving information that Mina, with some troops, was hovering about the place, halted his troops. After a considerable lapse of time, he again advanced from it, but so cautiously, that Mina, finding it impossible to succeed in his designs, withdrew his men from their ambuscade, covering their retreat in person, with a few men. By taking a circuitous route through the heights, he descended in the rear of the enemy, and proceeded to La Caxa, passing through Pueblo Nuevo. A Spanish officer, whose name we do not think fit to mention, there presented himself as a deserter to Mina. He obtained the confidence of the general; and, after having been furnished by him with some money, was despatched upon a secret mission. A sergeant and two soldiers of the regiment of Zaragoza likewise there deserted to him. They confirmed the accounts which had been previously received of the enemy's famished condition, of the discontent which prevailed among their troops generally, and of the numerous desertions which took place every night among the Creoles in particular. But the spirit of desertion which Mina's operations had begun to excite in the enemy's ranks, was at once checked by the unexpected and disastrous events we are to narrate in the succeeding chapter.

CHAPTER X.

Mina advances against Guanaxuato—Description of that city —He attacks it—Failure—He proceeds with an escort to the rancho del Venadito—Movements of Orrantia—Mina made prisoner—Brutal conduct of Orrantia towards him— Death of Mina—Reflections—State of Society in Mexico— Remarks on the present state of the royal forces, and the facility with which the country could be invaded, and its emancipation accomplished.

AT the hacienda of La Caxa, Mina assembled about eleven hundred troops, with which he advanced to the hacienda of Burras. In the night of the 23d, avoiding the high roads, and having made a circuit through the cultivated grounds, he passed along the heights immediately over the city of Guanaxuato, and gained, by day-light, an unfrequented spot called *La Mina de la Luz*, in the mountains, about four leagues therefrom. He halted there during the day, awaiting the arrival of some reenforcements of infantry and cavalry, despatched by Don Encarnacion Ortiz. They joined him in the afternoon, and his force, thus augmented, amounted to nearly fourteen hundred men, of whom ninety only were infantry.

Before relating the disastrous attack on the city of Guanaxuato, it will be proper to present the reader with a brief view of this celebrated town, because, in point of wealth and natural advantages, it holds the next rank in importance to the capital of New Spain; and indeed, as respects its physical resources, is equal, if not superior, to any city in Spanish America. These circumstances alone were such as to render its capture an enterprise worthy of the gallant Mina, and of the greatest importance to the revolutionary cause.

Guanaxuato, the capital of the intendancy of that name, is situated amidst the rich metalliferous mountains, which border upon the plains of Silao, Salamanca, &c. on the east. Those

plains, (usually called by the inhabitants the Baxio,) are the most beautiful and fertile to be found in all New Spain. The glowing description given by the baron de Humboldt, of the beauty and agricultural richness of this region, is not, in any respect, exaggerated; indeed it is impossible for the traveller to pass through that highly favoured country, without experiencing emotions of admiration and delight. The softness and purity of the atmosphere are soothing and invigorating; and the effect on the vision is such, that in no place have we ever beheld a verdure so vivid, as that of the vegetable productions of those plains.

The mountains in its vicinity are abrupt, lofty, and rugged, like all those which abound in minerals. They are intersected with deep barrancas, many of them from two to three hundred yards wide, and the awful precipices with which these barranca's abound, strike the stranger with surprise. The highly cultivated plains, and the chains of mountains, present the most sublime scenery, mingling the extremes of light and shade in the most striking and exquisite contrast; equalling the most celebrated of European scenery in grandeur and magnitude, and rivaling the softest landscapes of Lausanne or Italy.

Along the windings of one of these barrancas is situated the city of Guanaxuato. It is so completely bosomed by surrounding mountains, that it can only be seen after ascending the heights around it, when the novelty of its location strikes the stranger with astonishment. In some places, the city spreads out like a broad amphitheatre; at others, it stretches along a narrow ridge: while the ranges of the habitations, accommodated to the sinuosities of the ground, present the most fantastic, but perhaps the most varied and elegant, groups of dwellings. Prior to the revolution, its population was estimated at seventy thousand souls; but at present that number has experienced a great diminution.

During the rainy season, it is exposed to injury from the violent torrents that rush from the mountains down the barranca in which the city stands, in their passage to the plain of Silao. Large sums have been expended on works to restrain

these torrents within a channel; but, nevertheless, accidents happen to the city from them almost every year.

The finest silver mines of all America are in its immediate vicinity, particularly the famous one of Valenciana. Previous to the revolution, this mine yielded to its proprietor the clear annual revenue of half a million of dollars.

The mines of the Mexican kingdom, and particularly those of Guanaxuato, form an important and interesting exception to the remark, that death reigns in the mines of America. The mines of Peru, as well as those of New Granada, are in general situated in uncongenial regions, or those of perpetual snow. Vegetation is not seen for many leagues around them. Provisions are brought to them from a great distance. The miner has to undergo the transition from extreme heat to that of cold; to abandon delightful vallies, blessed with a fine temperature, to inhabit a frigid region, where everlasting sterility prevails. He is forced by the law of the *Mita* to abandon his family, or, if they accompany him, it is only to partake of his hardships and his sorrows. Widely different is the lot of the Mexican miner. At an elevation of from six to seven thousand feet above the ocean, he enjoys all the blessings of the temperate zone. In Mexico, we see the highest cultivation in the vicinity of mining stations. The intendancy of Guanaxuato is the smallest, and contains the most dense population of any other in Mexico. According to M. de Humboldt, it is fifty-two leagues in length, and thirty-one in breadth; covering a surface equal to nine hundred and eleven square leagues, which, in 1803, contained a population of five hundred and seventeen thousand three hundred souls, or five hundred and sixty-eight to each square league. The beautiful plains of Guanaxuato, extending in length thirty leagues, from Celaya to the Villa de Leon, and immediately around the mines, are in the highest state of cultivation, studded with three cities, four towns, thirty-seven pueblos, and four hundred and forty-eight haciendas. The mountains abound with fine forests, and provisions and luxuries are abundant in all directions around these mines.

Hundreds of miners of Guanaxuato came under our observation, and a more robust race of people we beheld not in

Mexico. Thus, from personal observation, we were led to adopt the opinion, that the labour incident to their course of life, was not so deleterious as we should otherwise have thought.

In the mine of Valenciana, for example, previous to the revolution, (for since that period, it has, in a great measure, become filled with water,) the business of a large portion of the labourers was the continually carrying upon their backs burthens of minerals, averaging three hundred pounds, from the bottom to the mouth of the mine, by an ascent of eighteen hundred steps, passing too through a temperature varying from forty-five to ninety-three degrees. Nevertheless, the miner enjoys perfect health; and the proportion of births to deaths, as given by M. de Humboldt, at once demonstrates, although a large proportion of the inhabitants are Indians, the salubrity of the mining station. In the city of Guanaxuato, the average number of births for five years exceeds that of the deaths two hundred for one hundred; and in the adjoining mines of Santa Ana and Marfil a hundred and ninety-five to a hundred.

That the labour in the mines may have been pernicious in former years, when it was compulsory, and when the barbarous law of the *Mita* was in force, when the pits and galleries were charged with impure air, and less attention was bestowed on the accommodation of the miner, we cannot deny; but the improvements which have been made within the last twenty-five years by the school of mines established in the city of Mexico, have lessened these evils, and introduced a system by which the mines are ventilated, and the air purified. The wages of the miner are more liberal, and his labour being voluntary, consequently, when he feels dissatisfied, he retires, and his place is supplied from the superabundant population of the adjacent fertile country. No doubt can be entertained, that when foreign arts and sciences are introduced into Mexico, where so spacious and favourable a field for their culture is at present fenced round by Spanish policy, human labour in the mines will be greatly diminished; and instead of the tedious and laborious occupations, now resorted to from necessity,

machinery will, in a great measure, effect these objects, diminish human suffering, and diffuse happiness over those delightful regions. It is there that the power of steam remains yet to be successfully applied.

Historians and travellers have been so much accustomed to copy each other in depicting the horrors of the unfortunate miner, that the galley slaves of Europe have been considered happy when compared with the individual who descends into the mines of Spanish America; and, although some of these poetical descriptions of Raynal, Pauw, and the Scottish historian Robertson, may have been in past times applicable to the mines of Potosi, and others among the Andes of Peru, we feel satisfied that such descriptions will not apply to the condition of the miner in Mexico. It has likewise been a vulgar opinion throughout the civilized world, that an immense proportion of the Indian population were employed in the mines. Leaving the consideration of what occurs in South America to the future observer, we confine ourselves to Mexico, when we state, that in the year 1807, according to the returns transmitted to the school of mines, the whole number of persons employed in all the mines of New Spain were thirty-two thousand three hundred and forty. So that, when we reflect that the population of New Spain is between six and seven millions, we at once perceive how small, to the general population of the country, is the proportion of persons engaged in this species of labour. But since the present revolution commenced, some of the mines have been abandoned, others have become choked up with water, and therefore, the above number must necessarily be considerably reduced. Should our hopes that a liberal government may at no distant day be established in New Spain be realized, it is plain that the introduction of machinery will not only lessen the number of men hitherto employed in those works, but will augment the produce of these mines far beyond what they have yet yielded, so as to keep pace with the necessary demands of an augmenting population, and the additional calls of the world in its career of improvement.

It is not, however, the mines of Guanaxuato which constitute the real wealth of that important intendancy of New Spain. Its riches are founded on a more durable basis. The benignity of the climate, the fertility of the soil, and the hardy race of men susceptible of every polish and refinement, and with genius calculated to pursue every intellectual enterprise with ardour and success, are blessings which will exist, even should the silver of its piled-up mountains be exhausted.

All the nutritious grains necessary for human enjoyment and support, find a congenial soil and climate in the intendancy of Guanaxuato. Those adjoining it are equally blessed. No part of the earth yields a more abundant product to the labours of the agriculturist, nor do we believe there is any climate so favourable to longevity, or a territory which would sustain a more dense population on each square mile, than the climate and territory of the intendancy of Guanaxuato. Not only its fertile plains, but its loftiest summits appear destined for the abodes of rural felicity.

The future race of Mexicans which is to flourish in this favoured part of New Spain, is not destined to depend on the caprices of artificial policy, nor the casualties of foreign commerce, for the supply of either necessaries or luxuries. The inhabitants of this intendancy, as well as of Mexico generally, are sure of the jealousy of selfish or less favoured nations; and it is, perhaps, fortunate for them, because they will the more readily apply the energy of their genius, and their industry, to supply from their own resources those commodities, by supplying the wants of which, other nations might be enabled to interfere in their prosperity, and subject them to the deleterious system which has already made South America suffer three centuries of wretchedness, and has not spared any part of the world from its vexation. As we have before observed, whatever foreign productions of the temperate zone may hereafter be introduced into this intendancy, will there flourish; while its indigenous productions, and the few of foreign origin at present introduced, are alone amply sufficient for human comfort and subsistence. Although the agriculture of

Mexico is a century behind that of Europe or the United States, still its products are astonishingly great. As wheat is sown in the dry season, it is raised by irrigation. M. de Humboldt makes the average produce of Mexico from twenty-two to twenty-five for one. But it varies in different situations from eighteen and twenty to seventy and eighty for one fanega sown;—its average thus exceeding four or five times the mean produce of France. Indian corn grows variously; in some parts of the Baxio it yields the astonishing increase of eight hundred for one fanega sown; in some parts, the harvest is considered bad at one hundred and fifty for one. The mean produce of the equinoctial region of Mexico is taken by M. de Humboldt at one hundred and fifty for one.

The fruits, whether indigenous or exotic, grow to great perfection in Guanaxuato; and in any of the markets are exhibited in the same basket, as well the products of the temperate as those of the torrid zone. There, in the highest state of perfection, are offered for sale, pineapples, grapes, oranges, bananas, peaches, apples, pears, &c., gathered within a few leagues of each other. The animals of Guanaxuato are of a superior kind. The sheep which browse on the mountains afford a delicious meat, and yield a remarkably fine wool. The horses, in point of beauty, form, muscle, bone and high mettle, are no where surpassed.

In no part of New Spain is there a finer race of men than in Guanaxuato, and the character is common to Indians and Creoles. Robust in their limbs, comely and athletic, with an eye denoting extraordinary acuteness, these men create emotions in a stranger rarely excited at first sight; and whenever the blessings of a liberal government shall be obtained by them, and the advantages of an extended and liberal education be diffused among them, we predict that the province of Guanaxuato will occupy a distinguished place among the Mexican provinces. But let us resume the operations against the city.

It is evident from the description we have given of Guanaxuato, that artillery, placed on the heights which encompass it, would soon cause it to succumb. However, as the enemy

entertained no apprehensions of formidable attacks from the patriots, they had neglected to fortify the passes of the mountains leading to the city, and relied for their defence on a castle or strong barracks which stood in a central position.

Mina was not provided with the necessary artillery to occupy the heights; and as Orrantia was following him, he resolved to carry the city by a coup de main. His intention was communicated to the troops, who manifested an anxiety to be led on. Pleased with their enthusiasm, and flattering himself that he was about to strike a blow which would give a decisive turn to the revolution, he made his arrangements accordingly. Filled with these presages, he appeared more than usually animated, and at dark advanced upon the city. At eleven o'clock the advanced guard arrived in the suburbs. A considerable halt was there made, to enable the division to close up, as the defiles through which the place had been approached were very narrow; in some places not affording a passage for more than a single file of men. The troops at length reunited, and although the sentinels were proclaiming within a short distance their "all's well," yet such had been the silence and good order on the part of Mina's troops, that the enemy were not apprized of his approach until after midnight; they received the first intimation of it, by the surprise and capture of one of their outposts. The alarm of the enemy became general, and a firing commenced from the castle. But habits of discipline were again found wanting, and scenes even more disgraceful than those we have formerly described as having occurred at San Luis de la Paz, were here reacted at the critical moment when order and obedience were most required. Mina found himself surrounded by a military mob. In vain did he employ persuasion or threats; his mildness won them not; his orders were not obeyed; and although the enemy's fire had slackened for some time, thereby offering an opportunity for the assault, all his attempts were fruitless—he could not induce them to move forward. Until near the dawn did the general fruitlessly exert himself to restore some order, and prevail on the troops to advance; but finding it impossible, and knowing that Orrantia was approaching, he was compelled to

abandon the assault, and to commence a retreat. With such troops as these, after the failure of an enterprise, a retreat must be synonymous with flight. Insensible that they could pass with more celerity and safety by preserving a regular order of march, they crowded to the defile by which they had entered, each one endeavouring to precede the other; they soon choked up the pass, and a tumult ensued. A few of the enemy perceiving the retreat, ventured from their position, and fired some random shots. The confusion augmented with the alarm of the fugitives, lest they should be overtaken by the enemy, as they were thus huddled together. At length the general, with infinite difficulty, succeeded in allaying their apprehensions, and restored some little order among them. During this disastrous scene, Don Francisco Ortiz, one of the patriot officers, had with part of his troops gained the height on which stand the works of the Valenciana mine; and most wantonly set fire to them. This act highly incensed Mina as he had uniformly given the most positive orders against the destruction of private property.

The troops were at length extricated from the defile, and a little after sunrise reached La Mina de La Luz where a halt was made. The general could no longer conceal his deep mortification, nor restrain his exasperated feelings. To a body of patriot officers who were assembled around him, he observed, that they were unworthy that any man of character should espouse their cause. "Had you done your duty," said he, "your men would have done theirs, and Guanaxuato would have been ours." The order of the day passed a censure on those who deserved it, and commended a few who had merited his applause by their good conduct.

Having thus failed in his favourite enterprise against Guanaxuato, and having now no immediate object in view to employ the troops; in order to deceive the royalists as to his own movements, he dismissed them to their respective comandancias, where he believed they might be useful in harassing the enemy, until he again required their services; thereby, at the same time, preserving his men and horses from the marches and countermarches to which they would have

been subject from the pursuit of Orrantia, and recruiting them for his next attempt. He strictly enjoined those commandants whose stations were around Guanaxuato not to allow supplies of any kind to enter the city; still fondly persuading himself that he would be able to renew the attack upon it with more effect. Retaining with him forty infantry and thirty cavalry, the general determined to proceed to the residence of his friend *Don Mariano Herrera*, at a neighbouring rancho called *El Venadito*. Accordingly, on the same evening, after having dismissed the troops, he took up his march for that place, but passed the night at a short distance from La Mina de la Luz.

The Rancho del Venadito was composed of a few houses on the lands of the Tlachiquera, about one league distant from the hacienda, and eight from the town of Silao. Its owner, Don Mariano Herrera, was a native of Guanaxuato. A man of high respectability, and of a mind well cultivated. He had suffered severely from the royalists. Orrantia had laid waste the hacienda, burned the buildings, and pillaged the church, converting it into a stable. The unfortunate Don Mariano had fallen a prisoner into his hands, and had been carried off by him, together with all the property that could be collected. After being thus despoiled, and his fine estate destroyed, he was compelled to ransom his life by paying twenty thousand dollars. Upon being set at liberty, he returned to his estate, and there employed himself in the pursuits of agriculture. His mansion and buildings being burned, his crops destroyed, his cattle and moveables taken away, and his funds exhausted, he was unable to restore his estate to its pristine condition; and it became a place for his personal subsistence and rest. Indeed, had he possessed the means of recalling its former comforts and beauties, it would only have exposed him anew to the depredations of an insatiable rapacity. He therefore constructed only a small house, and as his dependants were devoted to him, he hoped from the peculiar situation of the Venadito to enjoy a secure retreat.

The Venadito was placed in a small circular barranca, in front of which was a small plain. The barranca was more or less covered with a copse, among which were interspersed

large masses of rocks. Through these wound the only path to the high grounds surrounding,—a spacious table land, bounded at its extremity by barrancas. The road from Guanaxuato and Silao running through a long, narrow, and intricate barranca, in which dwelt a numerous peasantry warmly attached to the cause of liberty, and devoted to Don Mariano, was supposed to afford complete protection from a surprise by the enemy in that direction, as their approach could be communicated to Don Mariano in sufficient time to enable him and his attendants to take refuge among the barrancas in the rear of the Venadito. On the other side, there were no royalist posts for a considerable distance, and as the patriot troops under Ortiz ranged unmolested in that direction, no danger was thence apprehended.

The Venadito was therefore deemed perfectly secure from a surprise by day, and at night it was the custom of Don Mariano to take refuge in the mountains; so that although living in constant apprehension, yet he considered his person as secure. In this solitary spot Don Mariano passed his time, solaced by the attentions of a beloved sister, who had torn herself from her friends in Guanaxuato, to partake of her brother's fortune.

Mina and Herrera had formed for each other a warm friendship; the former gave to the latter his entire confidence, of which he was in every respect deserving. Mina arrived the next day, about noon, at the Venadito, where he was most cordially received by his friend. He understood that Orrantia was in Irapuato, at a loss to discover what direction he had taken, and he knew that he would be more confounded when he heard of the dispersion of the patriot troops. From these circumstances, and the position of the Venadito, Mina thought himself perfectly secure. He therefore determined to pass the night at the rancho with his friend, and ordered the horses of the cavalry out to pasture. During the afternoon Don Pedro Moreno, who resided in the neighbourhood, visited Mina and remained with him. The troops encamped in advance of the house; videttes were posted; and the general was so satisfied of his security, that, contrary to his usual custom, he retired to rest on the floor in the house. We mention these cir-

cumstances, because the sequel will show, that the general, in this rare instance of a departure from his usual habit of sleeping with his men, committed a most unfortunate error.

Among the pernicious and impolitic practices of the patriots, was that of permitting priests to come out of the enemy's towns to perform mass among them. Many of these men were spies and agents of the royalists, and never failed to collect every possible information for the advantage of their masters. The road by which Mina had that morning passed, lay through a small pueblo to which a padre repaired weekly from Silao. It was Sunday when the general passed through it. The padre waited on him to pay his respects, conducting himself with all that humility and sycophancy which his fraternity so well know how to use, when a point is to be gained. Mina treated him as he always did persons of his description, with attention and respect, but at the same time with caution. The padre either was informed of or conjectured Mina's destination; but be that as it may, he was so very anxious to carry the gratifying intelligence to the royalists, that the instant Mina departed from the pueblo, without waiting for his dinner, he mounted his horse and set out for Silao, distant about five or six leagues.

Mina's suppositions of Orrantia's incertitude of the course of his proceedings were well founded; for the latter was totally at a loss where to look for the general, and had marched to Silao in that state of uncertainty. The dispersion of Mina's troops increased the perplexity of Orrantia; but while he was in this state of confusion, (as he expressed himself in his despatches to the viceroy,) he received from the priest the unexpected but important information, that Mina had gone to the Venadito. Had not Orrantia by accident arrived in Silao that very evening, the padre's intentions and information must have been of no avail, because it was the intention of Mina to have marched from the Venadito the ensuing morning. A concurrence of unfortunate circumstances, however, seems to have led to that catastrophe which we are about to narrate. Orrantia, notwithstanding the fatigue of his troops, lost not a moment in putting them in motion, and having gained a posi-

tion suitable for his design, placed them in ambush near the Venadito, intending, as soon as day-light should enable him to discern objects, to fall upon Mina's party.

At dawn of the morning of the 27th, Orrantia's cavalry sallied from the ambush, and advanced in full speed on Mina's encampment. The alarm was given. The troopers of Mina, finding themselves cut off from their horses at pasture, mingled with the infantry, whose first impulse was to save themselves by flight. If thirty infantry only had united at that juncture, such was the situation of the ground, that they could have repelled the whole force of Orrantia, or at least could have held him in check and made good their retreat. But officers and soldiers thought of nothing but their own safety; in the utmost disorder they rushed forward to gain the summit of the hills, and thence escape by the barrancas in the rear. Mina, awakened by the noise and tumult of his flying troops, started from the floor, and rushed out of the house in the same apparel in which he had passed the night, without coat, hat, or even his sword. Regardless of his person, his first object was to attempt the rallying of his flying troops: but all his exertions were unavailing. He soon found himself alone. He beheld the enemy pursuing and cutting down his flying comrades; and attempted, when too late, to secure his own safety: but the enemy were upon him. Still hallooing to the fugitives to halt and form, he was seized by a dragoon: having no arms whatever, resistance was useless.

If Mina, on first leaving the house, had attempted to escape, he might have succeeded with as much ease as many others: but we suppose such a thought never entered his mind. His favourite servant, a coloured boy of New Orleans, after the general left the house, saddled his best horse, and went in pursuit of his master, carrying likewise his sword and pistols; but unfortunately he found him not.

The dragoon who captured Mina was ignorant of the rank of his prisoner, until informed of it by the general himself. He was then pinioned, and conducted into the presence of Orrantia, who in the most arrogant manner began to reproach him for having taken up arms against his sovereign, and to

interrogate him concerning his motives in thus becoming a traitor, insulting him, and lavishing upon him the bitterest criminations. Mina, who on the most trying occasions never lost his presence of mind and characteristic firmness, replied to the interrogatories in so sarcastic a strain, and with such strong expressions of contempt and indignation manifested in his countenance, that the brutal Orrantia started from his seat, and *beat with the flat of his sword his disarmed and pinioned prisoner*. Mina, motionless as a statue, endured this indignity; and then, with a crest brightened by conscious greatness, and an eye glowing with the fires of an elevated spirit, he looked down upon his conqueror, and said; "I regret being made a prisoner; but to fall into the hands of one regardless of the character of a Spaniard and a soldier, renders my misfortune doubly keen." The maganimity of Mina filled every man present with admiration, and even Orrantia stood confounded with the severity of his rebuke.

The capture of Mina was considered by the Spanish government as an event of such high importance, that they have honoured the present viceroy, Don Juan Ruiz de Apodaca, with the title of *Conde del Venadito*. Liñan and Orrantia have been presented with military crosses; and to the dragoon who actually took Mina, a yearly stipend has been assigned, accompanied by promotion to the station of a corporal.

A letter, purporting to be written by Mina to Liñan, on the 3d of November, after his capture, has appeared in the Mexican Gazette, which, although it contains nothing but what might be expected from a man whose mind was soured by the conduct of such men as Padre Torres, yet is couched in a style that renders it a suspicious document; besides that the whole tenor of Mina's conduct, from the moment of his capture to that of his execution, forbids the belief of his having written the letter in question. We further know, that subsequent to his capture, he wrote a letter to his countryman, Don Pablo Erdozain, who commanded at the work of Tepeaca, in which letter, written in the provincial dialect of Navarre, he gives some instructions about his own private affairs, and concludes by wishing Erdozain success, and exhorting him to pursue a

conduct marked by honour and consistency. We have thought proper to mention these circumstances, in order to counteract any erroneous impression that may have been made by the publication before alluded to in the Mexican Gazette. We have, on other occasions, noticed the recantations and penitential documents published in that Gazette, relative to Hidalgo, Morelos, and other patriot chiefs, all of which are now well known to have been forgeries of the royalists, for the purpose of deceiving the people.

Five of the officers of Mina's division, and some few of the soldiers, escaped from the Venadito. Don José Maria Liceaga succeeded in his flight on horseback. The Creole troops in general began their flight so early in the alarm, that they had time to conceal themselves in the broken ground. Of the division, four men were killed. Don Pedro Moreno, who had fled up the side of the barranca, was overtaken, killed, and his head severed from his body: this trophy was afterwards stuck on a pole. Don Mariano Herrera, and about fourteen of the troops, were made prisoners: these, with the exception of Don Mariano,* were executed.

* The fate of this generous friend of Mina is marked by so many singular circumstances, that it would be unpardonable to pass over it without notice. Don Mariano was conducted to Irapuato, and there thrown into prison. His affectionate sister accompanied him. Her exertions were unremitting to save her brother's life. On her knees, in his behalf, she implored the mercy of the leaders of the royalists. Her intercession at length prevailed. After he had been sentenced to death, and was blindfolded at the place of execution, he was reprieved. Unexpectedly snatched from the threshold of the grave, he was bereft of reason; and, in the close confinement in which he was subsequently placed, became permanently deranged. His only and constant employment was twisting his beard, which had grown very long. He became unconscious even of the presence of his sister; and his few incoherent expressions were lamentations for the fate of his friend Mina. The exertions of the sister to alleviate the situation of her wretched brother, were unceasing.

The last account we received of Don Mariano and his estimable sister, was in September, 1818; at which period the latter was in the hacienda de Burras, on her return to Irapuato from Guanaxuato, whither she had repaired to obtain from the royal authorities permission to adopt some means for the relief of her brother. She had so far succeeded as to procure permission

Orrantia, after the disgraceful scene we have already noticed, inquired the force of the patriots in his neighbourhood. Mina informed him; when, conceiving perhaps that a desperate effort might be made to rescue the general, he immediately retreated upon Silao with his prisoner, who was treated with every indignity. This ungenerous treatment was borne by Mina with his characteristic fortitude. The situation of his companions engrossed his reflections; and while on the road, his endeavours to cheer them up were constant.

On reaching Silao, he was put into irons by his savage conductor. Thence he was removed to Irapuato, and finally to Liñan's head-quarters in front of Tepeaca at Los Remedios, where he was committed to the care of the regiment of Navarra. There, his treatment was such as a brave man deserved; every humane attention was shown him, and his situation was made as comfortable as possible.

We have understood that among the few of the papers which fell into the hands of the enemy were some in cipher. To obtain an explanation of these was a matter of great consequence, because they would develop the names of certain patriots who resided within their walls, and who had held correspondence with Mina. Fortunately for the writers, Mina had been accustomed, on receiving any communication of importance, to copy it, and destroy the original. All his answers to their inquiries breathed fidelity to a cause in which he had been so shamefully treated, and thus displayed in a new light the nobleness of his character. We have conversed with some royal officers who were present at these conversations; and they have assured us, that such was the admiration excited by his conduct, that there were few officers in Liñan's army who did not sympathize in Mina's misfortune, and were much more disposed to liberate than to sacrifice him.

from Linares, the commandant general, to remove him, on giving two securities, each under heavy penalties, that he should return to his prison in Irapuato, in the event of his being restored to his reason, to his hacienda of the Tlachiquera, where she hoped, by the change of scene, to calm his imagination. How far she had succeeded in her pious intentions, we regret that we cannot ascertain.

Upon the arrival at Mexico of the express which had been despatched to announce the capture of Mina, couriers were sent by the viceroy to every part of the kingdom, to convey the cheering intelligence. Te Deums were chanted in the churches; salutes of artillery, illuminations, and rejoicings, took place in every town in possession of the royalists; and such was the general joy among them, that they hailed the capture of Mina as the termination of the revolution. These demonstrations on the part of the government and its adherents, are in themselves no common eulogium on the character of Mina.

In the city of Mexico, a great anxiety prevailed to behold Mina, and had he reached that place, great interest would have been made to save his life; but the viceroy, fearing the consequences that might ensue should he be brought thither, and being in constant dread lest he should escape, despatched an order to Liñan for the immediate execution of his prisoner.

When this order was communicated to Mina, he received it without any visible emotion. He continued to resist all overtures for the purpose of drawing information from him, but regretted that he had not landed in Mexico one year sooner, when his services would have been more effective. He likewise regretted quitting life so deeply indebted to certain individuals, who had generously aided his enterprise.

On the 11th of November (as well as we can now recollect) he was conducted under a military escort to the fatal ground, attended by a file of the Caçadores of the regiment of Zaragoza. In this last scene of his life was the hero of Navarre not unmindful of his character; with a firm step he advanced to the fatal spot, and with his usual serenity told the soldiers to take good aim, "*Y no me hagaïs sufrir*," (and don't let me suffer.) The officer commanding gave the accustomed signal; they fired; and that spirit fled from earth, which, for all the qualities which constitute the hero and the patriot, seemed to have been born for the good of mankind.

So anxious was the government that his death should be confirmed, that Liñan was instructed that a surgeon from each European regiment, and a captain of every company, should attend the execution, who should certify that Mina was dead,

and moreover describe the manner in which the balls entered his body, and note the one that caused his death. This was done, and the singular document was afterwards published in the Gazette of Mexico.

Thus perished this gallant youth, in the twenty-eighth year of his age. His short but brilliant career entitles him to a distinguished place on the list of those heroes who have shed their blood in bold and generous exertions to break the tyrant's sceptre, and to extend the blessings of freedom among the human race.

No man was ever better calculated to execute an enterprise of hazard than Xavier Mina. His person was slight, but well formed, and about five feet seven inches in height. His physical structure was well adapted for action. His moral qualities were great; personal valour he possessed in an eminent degree. Serene in the hour of danger, he was always prepared to seize upon any advantages that were offered by the conjuncture of events. At the head of his men, he infused into them his own spirit. In his diet, he was frugal in the extreme; no privations nor hardships seemed to affect him. He always preferred the simplest beverage. His cloak and saddle were his usual bed; even in the worst of weather, when every accommodation could have been afforded him, he encamped with his troops. He was affable, generous, and candid; his moderation and humanity were alike conspicuous, and to all the qualities of the soldier he united the manners and accomplishments of the gentleman.

To fail in great undertakings has been the lot of many a gallant man as well as Mina, and the world is ever ready to point out the measures which would have averted such failures. Inexperience may be excused for liberties of this nature, because they are generally the expression of wishes, rather than of judgments, as to what might have been done.

We think that the facts developed in the course of this work, unequivocally demonstrate that Mina was sacrificed to ignorance, to jealousy, and to a combination of unfortunate circumstances, which no foresight could have anticipated, and which led to the melancholy termination of a career, as full of

lustre as any of the same duration recorded on the historic page. Mina, at his outset in this undertaking, had to depend on the liberality of the mercantile world. The support he received as well in London as at Baltimore, was limited to a few generous individuals; he was in hopes that their example would inspire others, but he was disappointed at a time when liberal succours were most wanted.

We have, in the early part of this work, noticed, that at New Orleans a proposal was made to him, to attack and take Pensacola, an operation perfectly accordant with Mina's views, because Pensacola would have been to him a centre, where he might have collected troops, and might have organized his expedition against Mexico in a suitable manner; but he found that the parties at New Orleans not only were niggardly as to the resources they offered, but so ungenerous in the terms upon which they would assist the expedition, that he found it incompatible with his dignity and ulterior plans to undertake it. It is not necessary to go into a detail of all the disappointments of the general, such as we have found them to have been from an examination of his papers, because we should thereby wound the feelings or excite the ill will of certain individuals, who perhaps may not be so much to blame as we infer from the perusal of the papers in question. But of this point we are certain, that, if Mina had been in possession of funds, he could with the greatest facility have taken Pensacola, there raised two thousand men, and have decided the fate of Mexico in a few months. Indeed, with one thousand foreigners he would have beaten all the royalists under the command of Arredondo, and could then have penetrated into the internal provinces of Mexico, or have moved towards the capital if circumstances should justify it, or he would have had his choice of a route through Old Mexico, where he would have been joined by as many thousand natives as his situation required.

When Mina formed his plans in London, for the emancipation of Mexico, and even after his arrival in the United States, there did not exist any positive laws of either Great Britain or of the United States to interfere with his enterprise.

Besides, the royal forces receiving at that time succours of arms and ships from the private enterprise of both countries, the laws of neutrality, which require that both belligerents should be treated alike, necessarily entitled the patriots to the same privileges. The occasion was therefore favourable for his undertaking; but, as we before have said, funds were not forth coming, and Mina had no alternative, but either to abandon it entirely, or pursue it under all the straitened and unfortunate circumstances which surrounded him. That spirit of enterprise which once distinguished the mercantile body in the United States, splendid, adventurous, and successful, has become more narrow and personal than in former times. This change, from broad and comprehensive adventures to partial and separate undertakings, had a most pernicious effect on the expedition under Mina. The few merchants, who generously afforded aid,—suffered; the majority of their countrymen who embarked in the sacred cause, together with their leader,—perished; and instead of a field of commercial enterprise being laid open, embracing the richest regions of North America, the whole expedition was lost. It is not now practicable to estimate accurately the extent of the commerce that would have been opened, the amount of wealth that would have been acquired, or the number of ships and seamen which would have been employed, had the cause of Mexico been suitably sustained.

We have heard much of the assistance which the Mexican patriots have received from individuals in the United States; and indeed if we were to believe the one-tenth part of what the chevalier Onis has stated on this subject, we might suppose that the American merchants had been liberal in the extreme, in the supplies afforded to the Mexican people; but the real fact is, that a single house in London has supplied a larger amount of arms and clothing to Venezuela, than has been afforded by all the merchants of the United States to Mexico; at the same time that the royal armies were fed, and furnished with ammunition, ships, and every species of supply, from our principal sea-ports.

The resources which Mina obtained at Baltimore were small, although Don Onis magnified his expedition greatly. In his terrified imagination, it was converted into a formidable army, a vast train of artillery, and moreover, a large body of the imperial guard. This exaggeration served the minister's purposes; and the impressions made by his romantic tales excited such an alarm in the Holy Alliance, as to produce orders for a diplomatic attack on the government of the United States; the further notice of which does not properly belong to these memoirs. It was in vain that Mina endeavoured to convince some merchants of the United States of the advantages they would derive from the political and commercial emancipation of Mexico. It was in vain that he offered the most flattering terms for ample supplies; while the influence of the Spanish agents, through the contracts which they were enabled to bestow, produced such an influence on the monied men, and the monied institutions of some of our principal cities, as to interfere materially with the necessities of Mina, and the emancipation of Mexico.

The want of proper support from the mercantile world, was the *first* great obstacle which Mina had to contend against. The *second*, and most serious impediment to his enterprise, was the jealousy of Padre Torres. When Mina, with his little band of three hundred men, scarcely two-thirds of whom were foreigners, had fought his way into the interior of the kingdom, after a march of more than six hundred miles, gaining successive battles, confounding the royalists by his chivalrous exploits, and at length effecting his junction with the patriots, in the intendancy of Guanaxuato, eighty leagues only from the seat of government, we find that he had to encounter a perfidious enemy in the very man who ought to have been his firm and cordial friend. The proofs we have furnished of the jealousy and hatred of Mina which Padre Torres nourished, leave not a shadow of doubt that the sacrifice of the latter, as well as the failure of his undertaking, is to be attributed in an especial measure to this vindictive priest. Even after the capture of the heroic Mina, Torres gave further proofs of the jealous and rancorous feelings that actuated his conduct.

We have already stated that Mina had been conducted to the head-quarters of Liñan, in front of Tepeaca, and there retained a prisoner. This was known to the garrison in Los Remedios, and also that his fate was suspended till the return of a courier from the viceroy. During this interval, several of the foreign officers of the division, as well as some gallant Creoles, proposed forming a select corps of *two hundred* determined men, to storm the enemy's works, and rescue the general at every hazard. The design was as bold and feasible, as it was noble and practicable: every officer in the fort belonging to Mina's division was willing to have perished, rather than not to have succeeded in the attempt. It would have cost some lives; perhaps those of one-half of the adventurers, but there can scarcely be a doubt that the plan would have succeeded, as the enemy, confiding in the natural strength of their position, were lulled into entire security. Doctor Hennessey was deputed to lay the proposal before Padre Torres. His urgent requests were discountenanced by the unfeeling monster, whose uniform excuse was, that *it would cost too great a sacrifice of lives*. The sacrifice of Mina was his darling wish. He well knew the injuries he had already done the general, and that if the latter survived, such was his popularity that it was probable he would become the leading chief of the revolution. In fine, Torres refused permission for a single man to leave the fort, and denounced the enterprise as an act of rashness. He was supported in this opinion by colonel Noboa, the second in command in the fort. We deem it necessary, in justice to Mina, to state some facts relative to Noboa. He was a Spaniard. In the expedition, Mina appointed him chief of the staff. He possessed some theoretic knowledge, and was conversant in the smaller details; was an excellent drill officer, but whenever he ventured beyond the duties of that station, his deficiencies became manifest. In his manners he was arrogant and supercilious. In such service as that in Mexico, these defects might have been overlooked, but his conduct in the action at Peotillos, at Pinos, and at San Juan de los Llanos, had been such as to divest him of the necessary confidence. At the Jaral, his negligence was the cause of the marquis's

escape, and on that occasion he likewise committed such a disgraceful excess, that Mina ordered his aid, lieutenant-colonel Arago, to communicate to him a severe reprehension. For this act he never forgave Mina, and became his secret enemy. His conduct during the siege of Los Remedios was by no means on a par with that of his comrades, and badly suited the important command he held in it. He rarely left his quarters during day-light, occasionally visited the batteries at night, but on no occasion displayed either zeal, activity, or energy. He became, in fact, the creature of Torres, and consequently the enemy of Mina. For this reason, he disapproved of the daring scheme to attempt the rescue of the unfortunate prisoner.

We have thus touched on the prominent causes which led to the failure of Mina's undertaking, and to his own death. It will likewise have been seen, from what we have before remarked of the state of the revolution at the time of his landing on the Mexican coast, that the moment was unpropitious for the execution of his enterprise, and that he was prevented by untoward circumstances from uniting his small force with that of either Victoria or Teran. It is true, that both of those generals, at the time Mina was at Soto la Marina, had experienced serious reverses, yet neither of them was entirely overcome; and as Mina had with him a considerable number of arms, if fortune had not frowned he could have raised, either in the intendancy of Vera Cruz, or at Tehuacan in that of La Puebla, any number of men that might have been required; for we know from personal observation, that in either of the two last named intendancies, as well as in the populous one of Oaxaca, Mina would have been cordially received by almost every class of inhabitants. It is also true, that according to the Mexican Gazette of that epoch, the insurrection is stated to have been nearly quelled; that is, the revolutionists had then no armies that deserved the name. But the spirit of the people was unsubdued, and their feelings of hatred to the Spanish government was unchanged. The document of the bishop of Mechoacan, which was published about that time, gave a history of the state of Mexico, which could not have been sus-

pected of exaggeration, since it was addressed to the monarch of Spain by one of the few of his adherents who dared to speak the truth. There had no doubt been many disasters, and there was that kind of calm which succeeds to all storms; but a spark would then have lighted up a new flame, and *would now*, in every section of the viceroyalty. That hatred of Spain and a desire to be free from her control are the predominant feelings of the Mexicans, no one acquainted with their real character can deny; and that they will again develop their irrevocable alienation from the Spanish government, on the first favourable occasion that may offer, is beyond a doubt.

Although it might be more in place to introduce the ensuing observations as the concluding portion of our narrative, yet to ward off from that gallant youth, whose career we have just been tracing, the charge of rashness in invading Mexico, we think proper to introduce here our views of the practicability of expelling the Spaniard from the throne of that kingdom, evincing thereby the truth of the remark we have so often urged upon the reader, that Mina's disasters were altogether owing to the intervention of causes which prudence could not have anticipated, nor wisdom remedied.

The whole number of European Spaniards in the viceroyalty do not exceed *sixty thousand.* Even the fidelity of many of these to the royal government is very equivocal. We have frequently heard them utter sentiments as strong and as ardent in favour of the emancipation of Mexico, as we have ever heard from any Creole. The Spanish troops, we know, have become weary of, and alarmed at, the warfare practised in Mexico. The European soldiers at present there, as well as those who may in future be sent from Spain, will be found reluctant combatants, in the event of further military operations in those parts of the viceroyalty that are at present tranquil. Privations and death, under the most horrible shapes, stare the Spanish soldier in the face, in whatever part of the New World he sets his foot, under the royal banner; freedom, wealth, and independence are at his choice, whenever he thinks proper to forsake it. Officers and soldiers, on departing from Spain for America, take a final adieu of their families

and friends. The sailing of an expedition from Cadiz has become almost a funeral ceremony; indeed, it may be strictly so called, because, within the last ten years, Spanish America has become either the adopted country or the sepulchre of almost every officer and soldier who has left the Peninsula. The diseases incident to the coasts of Spanish America, and the barbarous warfare carried on in its interior, would not only destroy all the armies of Spain, but those of any other European nation, not even excepting those of the empire of the Russias. The whole number of Spanish European troops, at the period of the latest advices, in all the viceroyalty of Mexico, was short of *four thousand eight hundred.* This force, or even five times the number, would be insufficient to maintain the sovereignty of Spain over Mexico a single week. It is on the *Creole royal troops* that the government of Spain has had to depend for several years, and on them now rests the preservation of the viceroyalty. Of these last mentioned troops, a great proportion are men who at some period of the revolution have been in the patriot service, but, for reasons which have been assigned in the course of the work, are at present in the service of the crown.

Prior to the revolution, the Spanish government had been very careful to prohibit the body of the people from the use of fire-arms, and indeed all other military weapons. Since the present struggles, necessity has compelled the Spanish government to place arms in the hands of the Creole population, and to conciliate them by means never before employed or permitted; so that these, as well as those who have been in the service of the patriots, have acquired the use of arms, and they now feel an importance in society which they can never relinquish nor be divested of, and which must bring to their minds a constant comparison of the present, with their condition ten or twelve years ago; so that if the Spanish government were now to attempt disarming these royal Creoles, their authority would not be long-lived.

The interchange of sentiments between that portion of the Creoles who have been insurgents and those who have continued faithful to the royal cause, has already produced effects

which fill the authorities in Mexico with great alarm; and there is scarcely any abatement of those effects, since the period that the eloquent Bishop of Mechoacan so forcibly represented them. Indeed political rights and personal wrongs now constitute the private, and perpetual theme of conversation between the royal and patriot Creole. Among the latter, not one in ten thousand will ever be a sincerely faithful subject of the Spanish government, while the transition from a royalist to a revolutionist is easy, without danger or peril, and congenial to the feelings of nearly every Mexican Creole.

The present viceroy, who has conducted himself with extraordinary address in a critical situation, has stated in his despatches to the court of Spain, that he has reduced all the fortifications, and pacified nearly all the parts of the country in which were bodies of patriots; that he has captured such a party; that another has capitulated; and that more than eighty thousand of the deluded wretches have received the royal pardon, and adhered to their oath of allegiance to their legitimate sovereign. He assures the Spanish cabinet, that only some small bodies of banditti remain, which he *hopes soon to exterminate.* He states, that since the capture and execution of Mina, all hopes of success on the part of the insurgents in Mexico have been abandoned, and he even carries his consolatory assurances so far as to say, that no more European troops need at present be sent from Spain to Mexico, as he has the firmest reliance on the fidelity of the Creole royalists. These flattering accounts are received at Madrid with the same credulity as were the advices of Mina's embarkation with a splendid train of artillery at Baltimore; they have been published in the Gazette of Madrid, and circulated over Spain and the rest of Europe. The facts already noticed, and others which we have yet to state, will probably remove the veil of deception which has hitherto been thrown over the affairs of Mexico by the artifices and influence of the Spanish agents; and to every impartial reader present a view of the actual state of society in that country. We say that the royal forces at present in Mexico, consist of but few European troops, the main body of them being composed of *pardoned*

insurgents, and *disaffected Creoles*. We have stated that these forces are only royalists by accident or necessity, and that nine-tenths of them are impatient to abandon the Spanish standard. On the first occasion that they find a rallying point in a moderate force of disciplined foreign troops, with judicious leaders, they will use the opportunity to effect the independence of Mexico.

We have already depicted the conduct of the royal troops, in their different marches, sieges, and battles with Mina; and we have seen the exploits that this youth performed, with a mere handful of only three hundred men, of which, as we have before observed, less than two-thirds were foreigners. A general opinion prevails, as well in Europe as in the United States, that to make Mexico independent will be a very difficult undertaking. Taught by experience, we are of the contrary opinion; and have no hesitation in saying, that if a number of foreign troops, equal to that which within the last three years has been raised in *Great Britain, and translated to Venezuela*, had landed in Mexico, its independence would have been accomplished within three months from their disembarkation. The brave men who have been recently raised in Ireland, by the patriotic general D'Evereux, would have been more than sufficient to have decided the destinies of Mexico. Our assertion is supported, not merely by what we have shown was effected by Mina, with his small band of foreigners, and by other facts which we have stated, but also by our personal knowledge of the general solicitude of the Mexican people to be emancipated from Spanish domination.

We admit that the conquest of Mexico, *with the view of its being held dependent on any foreign power*, would be an impracticable undertaking; for it is their subjection to foreign rule that excites their abhorrence; and in resisting such an attempt by any other nation on earth, the Spanish government would be aided by the united exertions of all classes of Creoles and Indians; and the war would become like that in Spain against France. But if an invading army should erect the banners of freedom, and proclaim the emancipation of Mexico

from all foreign dependence, they would be hailed as deliverers, and would receive the cordial support of the great mass of the Mexican population.

We have seen the difficulties which the Spanish government experienced in concentrating a sufficient force to check the operations of Mina, and to subdue the patriots under such incapable officers as Padre Torres and his subalterns. Indeed, our opinion is, that had Liñan been defeated by Mina, the royalists could not have collected another army, sufficient to oppose him. That Liñan was not defeated, is solely to be attributed to the ignorance and want of energy of Padre Torres, and his jealousy of Mina. We are aware that it may be said, that any other distinguished foreigner would be liable to be treated as Mina was, from the jealousy of the Creole chiefs. One thousand foreign bayonets would place him above the influence of their jealous feeling; and besides, we hope, for the honour of the Mexican Creoles, that there are but a few among them capable of acting the base part that Torres and Moreno acted towards Mina. We feel great pleasure in stating, that we have seen hundreds of Creole officers, possessing the most generous and grateful feelings towards such foreigners as had come among them, either as visiters or with a view to aid them. Among the old Spaniards, jealousy towards foreigners is a principle flowing from education and interest; it is the necessary consequence of the knowledge of their own weakness, and has been particularly fostered by their government.

Among some of the elder Creoles likewise, some prejudices towards strangers are occasionally perceptible; but among the rising generation of Creoles, and particularly among those who have risen from youth to manhood since the revolution, we have scarcely met with an exception to their attachment to foreigners, with which the sentiment of liberty is always united. The young Creole of Mexico is perhaps the most ingenuous and generous of the human race; and, so far from his viewing the stranger as an intruder in his country, he lavishes on him unbounded hospitality, and appears only eager to acquire knowledge, and to form his manners from every pleasing example he sees.

We confess, that when we entered the Mexican territory, we were astonished to find the character of the Creoles so different from the representations that had always been made concerning it; and when we reflected on their mode of education, their entire non-intercourse with the people of civilized nations, and their limited literature, we were the more astonished to find them so liberal in their sentiments. In truth, we are perfectly convinced, that when the Mexicans shall enjoy the blessings of a free government, and the advantages of a liberal education, they will speedily become as estimable a people as can any where be found. We likewise think it of some importance to remark, that the Creole female, whether united in marriage to a European Spaniard, or to one of her own countrymen, is secretly or openly an enemy to the Spanish government:—this trait in their character we have seen frequently evinced, in the most striking manner. The threats of punishment have no effect in restraining them. During the revolution, they have been the faithful friends of the patriots; and, on many occasions, have given proofs of their intrepid spirit. Every defeat of the revolutionists clouded their brows with sorrow; while their fine eyes would beam through tears of joy, when they heard of the triumphs of the patriots over the Gachupins. The maternal songs they chant to their babes, are conceived in the spirit of liberty, and marked with hatred to the despotism of Spain. Ask a child of only five or six years old if it is a Spaniard, and it will with indignation reply, "*No soy Gachupin, soy Americano.*"—I am not a Gachupin, I am an American.

No gift of prophecy is necessary to predict the consequences that must ensue, when mothers thus inspire their children. Those consequences have already, in the short space of *nine years*, developed themselves in a manner that may well excite the fears of Spain for the tenure of her dominion over the Mexican kingdom. To preserve her tottering sovereignty, she has been obliged to establish garrisons in almost every city and village in the viceroyalty. Even on the haciendas, royal troops must be stationed, to keep the inhabitants in subjection.

In the intendancies of Vera Cruz, La Puebla, Mexico, Guadalaxara, Zacatecas, Valladolid, Guanaxuato, and in part of that of San Luis Potosi, detachments of from fifty to four hundred men are stationed at every few leagues distance from each other; thus their military force is scattered over an immense surface, so that in the event of an invasion, the government has only this alternative—to withdraw their troops from their scattered outposts, or expose them to be beaten in detail. Whenever their troops are withdrawn to any central point, the inhabitants will immediately break out in insurrection. The very circumstance of the troops being thus quartered in villages and on estates, betrays to the people the fears of the government, while the soldiers themselves, (being generally Creoles,) by forming connexions in the districts where they are quartered, are much more likely, in the event of future insurrections, to take the side of the people, and the cause of their country, than to adhere to a government which they already dislike. We consider, in fact, *every Creole regiment at present in Mexico, under the Spanish standard, as training for the establishment of the future freedom of their country.* This assertion is founded on a knowledge of their character and feelings; and indeed many European Spanish officers have confessed to us the important fact.

The Creole officers in the royal regiments we pronounce almost without an exception to be royalists only in appearance; they are at heart sincere patriots, ardently desirous of seeing their country emancipated from Spain, the moment it can be accomplished in a proper manner. Repeatedly have several of these officers said to the writer, "Ah! if the insurgents had not stained the first steps of the revolution with outrageous excesses which alarmed us all, we should have joined them, and established the independence of our country six years ago." This opinion is not expressed alone by the Creole royal officers, but by every enlightened native with whom we have conversed; and although the viceroy Apodaca says, in his late official despatches, that tranquillity is restored throughout the kingdom, we conceive that he is too well aware, that it is only

a deceptive calm. It is true, that in the great provinces of Vera Cruz, La Puebla, Oaxaca, and Mexico, the insurgents are no longer organized in hostile bodies, but the character and feelings of the inhabitants are unchanged, and they are daily becoming better acquainted with their true interests. The pardoned insurgents, in those provinces, now mingle with those who have been called royalists. They discuss among themselves their errors, their misfortunes, and their *rights*. A certain Spanish officer of distinction stated to the writer, that "although much had been said about shooting the insurgents, yet it was now useless to pursue that system, for he conceived that every Creole and Indian in the country either already was, or would shortly become, an insurgent; and because about *eighty thousand* of those *dangerous men*, who were before scattered in forests, are now in our towns and cities, where they are circulating their poison in the bosoms of our families; therefore," said he, "the royal indultos have only prepared the way for those eighty thousand men to contaminate the royalists, and to organize new convulsions."

We have no doubt, that every one of those pardoned insurgents would be shot to-morrow, if their fate depended on the Spanish government; but at the present day, such an experiment would be too dangerous, because there is not a royal Creole who would not turn his bayonet against any authority that should dare to violate the faith which has been pledged to the insurgents. We likewise have not the least doubt, that if the Spanish government could pour into Mexico myriads of European troops, so as to garrison every town and village of the kingdom, that every royal Creole would be deprived of his arms; but as Spain never can send a force capable of effecting such an object, it follows, that her sovereignty now depends, and must continue dependent, on the fidelity of the Creole troops.

The actual state of society in Mexico having been thus illustrated, it must be obvious to the reader, that the undertaking of the enterprising Mina, was by no means of that desperate nature which it has been represented to have been in various publications. It failed from causes which we think

have been amply explained; but he and his brave little band, by marching from the Mexican coast to Guanaxuato, have shown what may be accomplished at a future day by some more fortunate heroes.

Two thousand foreign infantry led by intelligent and gallant officers would overturn the Spanish government in Mexico, in less than six months from the day of their landing either on the coast of the Pacific ocean, or that of the Gulf of Mexico. The moment that it was known that a respectable invading army had landed with the avowed object of assisting the people to throw off the yoke of Spain, we repeat what we have before suggested, that they would be joined by as many Mexicans as it would be possible to arm and organize. The government would be compelled to withdraw the royal troops from their present positions; insurrections would follow; and the fate of Mexico would in all human probability be speedily decided.

Along the range of coast in the Gulf of Mexico there is not a single spot, excepting Vera Cruz, where two thousand men would be unable to effect a landing; for, although the coast cannot be closely approached by ships drawing much water, yet every part of it will permit the landing of troops from open boats; and by marches of three days they could reach the Table Land of Mexico. The line of coast is so extensive, as totally to preclude the possibility of its being guarded at all points against the invasion of a large body of troops.

The same facility for landing is offered on the coast of the Pacific ocean, from *Guatimala* to *California*. Acapulco and San Blas are the only two places at which a landing could be resisted; and even those places might be carried by a coup de main, without much danger or loss.

The beautiful and rich intendancy of Oaxaca offers the most secure and important field for the operations of an invading army of any part of the whole kingdom. There are several fine bays along its coast on the Pacific, where an army could land, at a distance of not more than thirty-five leagues from the city of Oaxaca. The whole province abounds in all the essentials for the subsistence of an army. The city of Oaxaca is the

neatest, cleanest, and most regularly built city in the kingdom. The edifices are built of a green stone, which preserves its colour perpetually, and gives to the city an appearance of freshness such as we have never seen in any other. The convent of San Francisco, built more than two hundred years ago, looks, at this day, as if it had just come from the hands of the architect. Streams of the purest water flow through all the streets; and in all the squares are beautiful fountains, for the use of the inhabitants. The fruits of the torrid and temperate zones are to be seen every day in the market place. We have seen on one side of the road trees loaded with oranges, and on the other fields of wheat. The temperature of this city is considered equal to that of any other in New Spain. The thermometer rarely falls below sixty-three, nor ranges higher than seventy-eight, degrees. The inhabitants are well made, and remarkable for longevity. The women are likewise distinguished for their beauty and vivacity. Along the coast of Oaxaca the climate is destructive of health; but the greater part of the province, and particularly the mountains of the Misteca, are famed for their pure and salubrious air. The most populous Indian villages of all New Spain are found in this province. The Indians of Tehuantepec are noted for their activity and beauty. The whole of these Indian villages may be considered as containing true friends to the patriot cause, who would afford their cordial support to an invading army.

From the port of Guasacualco, at the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico, an army could march in forty-eight hours to the Table Land of Oaxaca. We know of no part of New Spain so accessible to an invading army as this province; nor do we know of any other which presents so important a rallying point for the patriots of the provinces of Vera Cruz, Puebla, and Mexico, as this on the banks of the noble navigable river of Guasacualco. The resources for the payment of an army are also abundant in this province. It is here that the article of cochineal is most extensively raised, to the value of above a million of dollars per annum.

All the preceding suggestions, respecting the facility of invading and emancipating Mexico, are not offered with a view

of inviting the attention of desperate adventurers, but with the hope of their being useful, at no distant day, to the governments of the republics of *Colombia*, *Buenos Ayres*, and *Chili*. Although the writer is not fastidious as to the means that may be employed to effect the emancipation of Mexico, yet he has no hesitation in saying, that if it ever should be accomplished by foreigners, he would wish them to be citizens of the United States. This view may perhaps be displeasing to many of our peaceable citizens; but, as we are living in an age of revolutions, when the happiness of man is the great purpose and end of society, it is not only a natural desire on the part of a citizen of the United States, but would be on that of every liberal mind throughout the civilized world. The New World may soon have to exert all its physical and moral resources against the ambitious and antisocial schemes of the Old World, and rescue the fairest portion of the earth from the odious debasement under which it has so long suffered. It is not extravagant to believe, if geographical position and other circumstances be considered, that there should arise a conviction among the inhabitants of the United States and those of Mexico, that it is *their policy and interest to form a political and commercial alliance.*

In the following chapter, we shall resume the detail of the operations of the royalists against Los Remedios; and, in its sequel, it will be seen, that notwithstanding all the disasters of the patriots subsequent to Mina's death, and the flattering statements made by the viceroy of the general pacification of the kingdom, the revolutionists maintained last year formidable parties in the provinces of Guanaxuato, Mexico, and Valladolid, and more especially on the coast of the Pacific ocean, in the last named province.

CHAPTER XI.

Assault of Los Remedios, on the 16th of November, and repulse of the enemy—Sortie by the garrison on the enemy's intrenchments—Cause which led to the evacuation of the fort—Los Remedios evacuated, on the night of the 1st of January, 1818—*Barbarities of the royalists there—Operations of the contending parties, after the reduction of Los Remedios—Loss of Xauxilla—Detailed account of the subsequent events of the Revolution, and its actual state in the month of July*, 1819—*Reflections.*

THE royalists, encouraged by the death of Mina, redoubled their exertions to obtain possession of the fort of Los Remedios; but they found that the spirits of the besieged grew sterner as necessity pressed upon them. The forces of the enemy, relieved from those apprehensions of Mina which had before paralyzed their exertions, now came forth with confidence, denouncing the severest vengeance upon all those places which had rendered him assistance.

The patriot government appointed colonel Don Miguel de Borja, a Mexican officer, commander of the troops in the field; and colonel Arago, aid to the late general, second in command. But some of the patriot chiefs, jealous of being commanded by one of their own number, carried on an independent partisan warfare against the besiegers, without paying much attention to the orders of the government or its officers.

The enemy, in the interval since the affair at Los Remedios, mentioned in Chapter IX., had kept up a brisk cannonade, which considerably damaged the works of the besieged; the battery of Santa Rosalia having been thereby rendered untenable. As soon as Mina was shot, they made an exulting and menacing communication of the event to the garrison, recommending them to *confess themselves*, as they intended carrying

the fort by storm, when every individual within it should be put to the sword. Immediately afterwards, as if intending to carry this threat into execution, they concentrated their fire upon the curtain between the batteries of Santa Rosalia and La Libertad; and, on the morning of the 16th of November, succeeded in making a practicable breach therein. In the afternoon, the enemy were observed to be making preparations for the assault. About two o'clock, their bugles sounded the advance, and the columns moved up, at the same time, to La Cueva, and towards the breach; other detachments also advanced upon Tepeaca and Pansacola: but it was soon ascertained that the latter movements were feints, and that the real attack would be directed against the breach. Accordingly, the necessary preparations to receive them were made: the women, and even grown children, who on these occasions vied with the men in point of daring, soon flocked with the peasants to the threatened point, to bear their share in the danger and glory of the day.

The enemy advanced very steadily to the breach, under cover of a fire from their works, bearing before them the symbol of extermination. They moved up with great resolution, though exposed to a galling fire of musketry and grape-shot, and showers of missile weapons discharged by the peasants and women, the latter of whom, regardless of danger, mounted the ramparts, with their aprons and baskets filled with stones, and hurled them at the astonished assailants. The enemy, nevertheless, preserved their order of close column, until within about twenty paces of the breach, when they suddenly halted; some few determined men precipitated themselves from the head of the column, actually entered the breach, and there perished: among these intrepid men was the officer who bore the black flag. But the rest of the assailing column remained as if petrified,—their dismay had completely mastered them; which being observed by the defenders of the breach, they sallied forth, made a vigorous attack, and compelled the enemy to give way, and fly in the utmost disorder, leaving the side of the barranca covered with their killed and wounded. An irregular fire was maintained, from different

points, for some time; when the enemy, relinquishing the attack, retired within their intrenchments, having suffered severely.* The loss of the garrison was considerable, the survivers of Mina's division bearing a large proportion of it.

Liñan, after this discomfiture, directed his attention to the reconstruction of the mine under the work at Tepeaca; and, having succeeded in his approach by means of a covered way, effected the dislodgement of the besieged from a breastwork which had been thrown up in front of the gallery to prevent any further attempts of the enemy at mining. In this operation, and in a vigorous cannonade, the enemy dissipated the remainder of the month of November, and the whole of December. Their repeated efforts failed to blow up Tepeaca.

We have before mentioned, that considerable quantities of charcoal, saltpetre, and sulphur, were in the fort, from which a sufficiency of powder should have been made: but, either through the bad management of the chiefs, or a dependence upon supplies from Xauxilla, only one man had been employed in the composition of this indispensable article. The operation was performed by the patriots in a very tedious manner, by means of *metates*. By this stone the ingredients are ground, and afterwards grained in sieves. This process is so slow, that a man cannot manufacture more in a day than an expert artificer would make in an hour. Being manufactured without art, or a scientific knowledge of the necessary proportions of component materials, its grain is bad, it frequently hangs fire, and can seldom be relied upon. Bad, however, as would have been the quality of the powder, a sufficient quantity might have been made if proper measures had been timely employed: but, from the defects in this point, and the length of time that the garrison had maintained the cannonade, it was discovered, in November, that the magazine was nearly exhausted.

* The official despatch of the royal commander acknowledges his loss, in this affair, to be forty-four killed, including seven officers; one hundred and seventy-seven wounded, including twenty-three officers; and one hundred and thirty-six bruised by missile weapons, including eleven officers:—total, three hundred and fifty-seven.

. To remedy the want of ammunition, which the partial succours from Xauxilla were insufficient to supply, it was determined to make a sortie on the enemy's intrenchments, whence it was hoped that a supply might be obtained. Accordingly, the enemy's works opposite to La Libertad were selected as the point of attack, it being, indeed, the only position fairly open to such an enterprise. Three hundred men were detached for this service, and the command was given to captains Crocker and Ramsay, the two intrepid youths who distinguished themselves, on a former occasion, against the same position.

Preparations were made; at night, the party sallied; and, gaining the rear of the enemy's first battery, stormed the second line, under the expectation that the enemy would abandon the first, and that possession would thus be gained of both. In this they were deceived: the second line was carried; when the enemy retired within their third intrenchment, whence a brisk cannonade and fire of musketry prevailed, which seriously annoyed the assailants. The gallant party, however, having succeeded in obtaining a small quantity of ammunition, spiked the artillery, dismantled and rolled the guns down the barranca, and then retired; but with the loss of twenty-seven killed, and several wounded.

Towards the last of December, the ammunition was entirely exhausted; and, as Xauxilla, whence the fort had been hitherto supplied, had in the meantime been closely invested, it was impossible to obtain further supplies from that place. The garrison was thus reduced to the alternative of either evacuating the fort, or awaiting another assault of the enemy. This last course would have been highly imprudent; for the want of ammunition would have exposed them to the ultimate discretion of the enemy. The evacuation was therefore resolved upon. The only two points by which this could be effected were La Cueva and Pansacola. If made from La Cueva, it would be necessary to descend into the plain, and encounter the main force of the enemy, which would have been certain destruction. The only remaining alternative was

to proceed by Pansacola. The enemy were weakest at that point; but great obstacles to the attempt also existed there, arising from the asperities of the route by which it must be effected; for the way ran through the barrancas, in which it was impossible to move in compact order; besides that, they were so hemmed in by precipices, as to render it extremely difficult to ascend to the elevated ground; and even there, the enemy had thrown up a chain of intrenchments. The prospects of the garrison were therefore more discouraging than those of that of Sombrero when reduced to a like extremity; but a hope was indulged that the mountains might be gained before the enemy could reenforce their posts, or despatch parties from the grand encampment in pursuit. Pansacola, therefore, was the point determined upon, as affording the best and indeed the only possible means of retreat; and the night of the 1st of January, 1818, was fixed upon for the evacuation of the fort.

It had been the custom in the fort for the sentinels to pass the watch-word during the night; but, as soon as the evacuation was determined upon, colonel Noboa ordered the discontinuance of this practice. This, in the event, was a fatal measure, because it indicated to the enemy that the garrison was about to undertake some movement, which they naturally supposed must be the evacuation of the fort. They therefore made every preparation to cut off the retreat, and to intercept as many of the fugitives as possible. Within the fort, the greatest secrecy had been observed; not even Mina's officers were informed of the proposed evacuation, until the moment it was about to be carried into execution; but they, as well as the enemy, had anticipated the plan, from the change that had taken place in the practice of the sentries.

At the appointed hour, on the night of the first of January, the whole of the garrison, the troops, peasantry, women and children, assembled at Pansacola. Scenes of distress then took place which exceeded even those of Sombrero. The abandonment of the wounded, whom it was impossible to remove; the certainty of their falling into the power of a remorseless enemy; the recollection of the fate of those who had remained

in a like situation at Sombrero,—were circumstances that impressed the final parting of companions and relatives with unutterable horror.

Every thing being arranged, the advanced guard, with which marched Padre Torres, descended into the barranca. The other divisions of the troops followed; but, owing to the peculiar difficulties of the pass, their progress was so slow, that before half the garrison was out of the fort, the advanced guard encountered an enemy's post. The sharp skirmishing that took place between the parties, breaking upon the dead stillness of that midnight retreat, roused the enemy, and put them on the alert. From their head-quarters, a column entered the fort by Tepeaca. Finding it deserted, they communicated the information to their comrades in front of Pansacola, that the garrison was sallying from that point. Immediately large fires blazed up in every direction, which, throwing a strong glare of light into the barrancas, and over the summits of the contiguous hills, pointed out the direction taken by the fugitives. The enemy's troops, who had entered by Tepeaca, now descended in pursuit of those who were waiting to pass out of the fort. Then, horror and confusion put to flight the death-like silence which had been maintained on the part of the fugitives. The air was rent with the shouts of the men, the screams of the women and children, and the jeers and hallooing of the enemy, united with the discharges of musketry. Numbers, attempting to fly from the bayonets which threatened momentary annihilation in the rear, rushed in crowds to the fatal pass, which being too narrow to contain them all, they tumbled over each other down the precipices, where they met instantaneous death, or had their limbs dreadfully fractured and mangled. Those who came last were more fortunate than their comrades, for, rolling over the dead, dying and wounded who had preceded them, and had reduced the fall by their number, many of them escaped with life. Sounds of wo re-echoed through the barrancas, and were answered by the scoffs of a vindictive enemy. As soon as the alarm had been given, the enemy so posted their infantry as completely to guard every practicable pass to the hill-tops; many,

nevertheless, did succeed in forcing a passage to them; while others concealed themselves in the barrancas. At length, the dawn broke upon this night of horror, and enabled the enemy to adopt new precautions to secure the fugitives. Every cleft and bush was then explored by the enemy's infantry; and numbers of both sexes, there found, met with instant death. Don Cruz Arroyo, dragged from his concealment, met his death beneath the bayonets of the soldiers. Being recognised by them, they inflicted upon his lifeless body the most shocking barbarities, in revenge for the destruction which the spirit that once animated it had showered upon them. They cut off his head, tore out his entrails and his heart, and satiated their worse than savage eyes with the sight of his yet quivering members. The cavalry scoured the plains, and took and killed many, who, having escaped the horrors of the night, had proceeded on their way, rejoicing that they had so far, and, as they hoped, altogether, escaped the enemy.

Among those who escaped were Padre Torres and twelve of Mina's division. The rest were killed during the siege, or fell in the darkness of the night in the barrancas. Among the latter were the brave captain Crocker and doctor Hennessey. Among the prisoners were colonel Noboa, the only one of the division who fell into the enemy's hands, and the two brothers of Padre Torres. Numbers of women were made prisoners, with the details of whose treatment delicacy forbids us to pollute our pages. It is impossible to depict all the barbarous excesses of the brutal soldiery: the acts committed at Sombrero, though melancholy in the extreme, cannot approximate those at Los Remedios. The sick and wounded in the hospital calmly anticipated death, but not in the dreadful shape in which they were destined to meet him. The building in which these hapless victims were huddled was fired, and when any of the unfortunate wretches, who had strength enough left to attempt crawling out of the flames, made their appearance, they were thrust back or bayoneted, and in less than an hour their cries were succeeded by the silence of death —their ashes alone remained. This is one of those savage exploits, any notice of which would of course be excluded

from the columns of the Mexican Gazette; but its authenticity does not depend on such authority; it has been related by those who were at that moment prisoners of Liñan, and by Spanish officers, who shuddered while they told the melancholy tale. Denials of these acts of savage barbarity might be listened to, or excuses for their commission might be of some avail, upon the plea of the uncontrouled frenzy of a few individuals, had not a frightful catalogue of similar horrors, practised by the royalists during this revolution, stained the annals of the Spanish arms. A few of them we have already noticed, and the black list will be swelled by a detail of others in the following chapter.

The majority of the combatants, who were taken prisoners, did not long remain in doubt as to their fate. Liñan, ever anxious to render more distressing the situation of his unfortunate prisoners, not content with the prospect of the fate which awaited them, was unceasing in heaping acts of indignity upon them. He compelled them to labour in the demolition of the works, and immediately afterwards shot them. Among those who thus suffered death was colonel Noboa, who, in his last moments, displayed great fortitude, and died exclaiming "Viva la republica."

Of the females who were made prisoners, those belonging to the families of the chiefs were sent to the enemy's towns. In this number were two sisters of Padre Torres, one a most amiable and interesting young lady, and the whole of the female part of the family of Don Miguel de Borja. The women of the lower orders were set at liberty, after having their heads shaved bare.

The enemy found a considerable supply of grain in the magazine of the fort, but nothing else; although Liñan boasts, in his despatch, of having found a quantity of ammunition—a pitiful fabrication, the like of which has often characterized the official accounts of the royal commandants.

Thus fell the fort of Los Remedios, having withstood, for four months, the attempts of an enemy vastly superior in numerical force, in artillery, in ammunition, and in the superior experience and discipline of their troops, a large proportion of

them having belonged to the royal armies in the campaign in the Peninsula.

The death of Mina, and the fall of Los Remedios, enabled the royalists to take active measures to dispossess the patriots of their remaining strong hold. They flattered themselves, that, when this was effected, the long protracted insurrection would soon be terminated. They do not appear to have been fully aware of the fact, that the patriots were animated by a spirit of hatred which could not be subdued, and that if driven out of forts, they would retire to the mountains and barrancas, and instead of acceding to terms, would suffer every possible privation, and eventually become, (what they are generally called,) a body of banditti.

In the brief view we have taken in the course of this work, of the military operations of the patriots, we have exhibited their alternate successes and defeats, and have shown that the latter arose from ignorance, want of organization and discipline, a deficiency of muskets, and especially from the want of combination among the patriot chiefs. To the two last mentioned circumstances, more than to any others, may be ascribed the success of the royalists; for there does not exist the least doubt in our minds, that during the years 1814, 1815, 1816, and 1817, a union of the patriot forces, and a supply of eight or ten thousand foreign muskets, would have decided the struggle in favour of the revolutionists in a very few months. It is not now necessary to enter into a detail of the scene of disasters and confusion which took place among the patriots subsequent to the death of Mina, except so far as may tend to show the unconquerable spirit of hostility to the Spanish government, which predominates in the people in arms in the intendancies of Guanaxuato, Valladolid, and Mexico.

We have made mention of the little fortress of Xauxilla, as being the place where the members of the patriot government held their sittings. During the month of December, the royalists of the intendancy of Valladolid had raised a force of one thousand men, for the reduction of Xauxilla. The direction of this operation was given to Don Matias Martin y Aguirre,

commandant general of the province of Valladolid, in which province Xauxilla was situated. Don Matias, a distant relation of the unfortunate Mina, was a most able and active officer. His exertions contributed much to preserve the jewel of Mexico, in the diadem of Spain. Unlike his contemporaries, he never wantonly died his hands with blood. He obeyed with reluctance many of the cruel mandates of his government; but at the same time mercy influenced all his conduct, and tempered his sword with clemency. On account of his distinguished services, he was appointed commander of the regiment of dragoons, called the *Fieles de San Luis*, which, although composed of wretched troops, was among the best appointed, best organized, and finest cavalry in the royal service. He enjoyed, at the period we are now speaking of, the confidence of the viceroy; and warmly seconded his exertions to attain the object of their government with as little effusion of blood as circumstances would permit. He enjoined it upon all the officers within the sphere of his command, to act with mercy; an injunction obeyed by some of them, while others, freed from his immediate control, continued to give loose to their long indulged spirit of cruelty. His conduct to the prisoners that fell into his hands, was not merely merciful, but generous; and on several occasions he took upon himself the responsibility of disobeying superior orders, rather than deprive them of their lives. We feel great pleasure in thus offering our faint tribute of respect to one whose sentiments present so great a contrast to those of the major part of the Spanish chiefs. Some of the officers of Mina's expedition, who fell into the hands of Don Matias, were most humanely treated; and the soldiers who were made captives, were liberated on condition that they should serve two years in the royal armies. One of them, an American, through his intercession was pardoned, liberated, and sent to the United States. Not one of Mina's associates suffered death at his hands, and although some of them were sent to Europe by orders of the government, it was contrary to the wishes of Don Matias. Some of Mina's officers, now in the United States, owe their lives to the humane Aguirre.

Don Matias, on investing Xauxilla, found, that from its strength, and its peculiar situation, it was capable of making a formidable resistance. The fort was commanded by a man of the name of Lopez de Lara, supported by two officers of Mina's division, captains *Lawrence Christie* and *James Devers*, both Americans. A few days after the siege commenced, the members of the government retired to the Tierra Caliente of Valladolid.

Don Matias, prior to the commencement of hostilities, sent a flag of truce, offering terms of capitulation to the garrison, which were immediately rejected. Approaches were then made, and after several ineffectual attempts to carry it by storm, the enemy were compelled to await its reduction by famine.

While these operations were going on at Xauxilla, Padre Torres escaped from Los Remedios, and retired to the pueblo of Penjamo. The plains and mountains in its vicinity afforded him a temporary refuge. The pueblo of Penjamo is located, as has been before observed, about four leagues from the fort of Los Remedios, upon a declivity near the foot of the range of hills in which the fort was situated, overlooking a fine plain, highly cultivated with Indian corn, and forming an amphitheatre with the surrounding hills. The inhabitants of the plain of Penjamo were, generally speaking, in easy circumstances, and many of them, prior to the revolution, had possessed considerable wealth. The pueblo of Penjamo was the general residence of those farmers, who were distinguished for urbanity and hospitality. Exclusive of their agricultural pursuits, they carried on an extensive trade in provisions, particularly in live hogs, which were sent to the city of Guanaxuato.

The inhabitants of the pueblo, and indeed of all the plain, had been conspicuous, during the whole of the revolution, for their enthusiasm in favour of the patriots; and it was in this place that Torres had commenced his military career. He was at that time the curate of a little village near Penjamo, called *Cuitzeo de las Naranjas*. Subsequently becoming commandant of the place, at the time when Mina penetrated into the province of Guanaxuato, Penjamo formed his immediate

comandancia. Notwithstanding the despotic sway which he exercised over his friends from his head-quarters at Los Remedios, a great portion of the people still remained attached to him. Amidst the general destruction of towns and villages, Penjamo had not escaped. Its handsome buildings had all been razed to the ground, and on their sites had been erected a few huts. It was here that Padre Torres established his nominal head-quarters, after the evacuation of Los Remedios: we say his nominal head-quarters, because the circumstances of his situation effectually prevented him from remaining permanently in any one spot, even had his coward nature permitted him; for the enemy covered the plain with their troops in pursuit of him, and strained every nerve to overtake him. But his activity being excited by his fears, he never slept two successive nights in the same place or on the same mountain. During this period of pursuit and danger, which continued nearly a month, Torres retained with him a small escort of cavalry; and, without leaving the plain and mountains of Penjamo, was enabled to elude the vigilance of his pursuers. Had he displayed the same activity, when it would have preserved the troops under his orders, or infested the enemy, he would have deserved and received commendation. Aware of his inability to cope with his pursuers, he was compelled to use unremitting personal exertions to guard against a surprise. Whenever it became dark, he invariably conducted his escort, through by-paths and circuitous routes, to secret places in the mountains, always distant from the place where he had passed the preceding night. He laid down with fear and trembling, with a servant near him to give the alarm in case of danger, and a horse ready saddled and bridled, not with the view of acting on the defensive with his troops, but of securing his personal safety by instant flight. He possessed some of the fleetest horses in the kingdom, was an expert rider, and always kept near him three or four horses ready to be mounted. In the occasional actions which his troops had with the enemy, he invariably acted in a manner ill becoming a soldier and a commander, always taking post in a commanding situation in the rear, instead of animating his soldiers by his presence in the

fight; and, on discovering among his men the least appearance of confusion or dismay, he would put spurs to his horse, and leave them to shift for themselves.

The enemy, in the meantime, were not idle: their light divisions scoured the country in every direction. Neither Torres nor his subaltern officers opposed any resistance to their progress, each individual being occupied in providing for his own safety. They passed the night in the mountains, *sub dio*, regardless of the inclemency of the weather; and in the day time, a watch was kept from the steeple of a church, or some commanding height, to guard against a surprise from the enemy. Such was then, and is now, the manner of life of these unfortunate people; and nothing can more forcibly illustrate their abhorrence of the royal government, than that they should thus submit to such privations, rather than accept the protection of the royal amnesty.

The enemy soon fortified themselves in the Valle de Santiago, thereby depriving the patriots of the resources of that district. They also occupied the hacienda of Queramaro, about a league from the foot of the hill which ascended to the late fort, which prevented its being reoccupied by the patriots, and deprived Torres of a valuable portion of his comandancia. In the Tierra Caliente of Valladolid, they were equally active. Over the whole country, the patriots seemed panic-struck; and such was the want of unity in their operations, that even skirmishes with the enemy at length became of rare occurrence.

Torres, finding that the enemy relaxed the vigour of their pursuit, made a faint exertion to relieve the garrison of Xauxilla, the siege of which place had been vigorously prosecuted by Aguirre. When arrived within a league and a half of the enemy, he despatched Don Pablo Erdozain, an excellent cavalry officer, (of whom we have before made mention) with a party of three hundred men, to lay in wait for a party of the enemy, of about the same number, who left their camp every morning for the purpose of foraging. The measures of Don Pablo were judiciously taken. Placing his troops in ambush,

he anxiously awaited the approach of the enemy. They were soon descried advancing; and every thing promised a successful result. They entered the ambush unsuspectingly, and without order. At that favourable moment, Don Pablo ordered the charge; but, to his inexpressible mortification and astonishment, his troops, instead of obeying his orders, after wavering for a moment, turned their backs upon the enemy, and fled. They were immediately pursued; and the gallant Erdozain with difficulty effected his escape.

A rencounter with a party of the enemy occurred, about the same time, at an hacienda called *Surumuato*, situated a few leagues from Penjamo, which terminated as fruitlessly as the action we have just narrated: for, although the royalists were actually defeated, and might have been totally destroyed, yet they finally came off victorious, in consequence of the flight of the patriots at a critical moment.

Padre Torres, instead of being humbled by his recent misfortunes, became every day more capricious and despotic; and at length committed an act which caused his subalterns to tremble for their personal safety, and drew down upon him their odium. Don Lucas Flores, the commandant of the Valle de Santiago, who had been one of the firmest and most useful friends of Torres, was, upon some frivolous pretext, arrested; and, without a trial or a hearing being allowed him, was conducted to the mountains, and there privately shot. The manner of his arrest displays the treacherous and barbarous character of Torres. He sent an order to Don Lucas to meet him at a certain place: the order was obeyed; and Torres, with his staff, there met him. The customary embraces passed between them; a social intercourse followed; and cards were introduced. Don Lucas lost all his money, of which the padre won a considerable proportion; they dined, with their usual cordiality. After dinner, Flores was arrested, without the least previous explanation. His personal effects were immediately shared by the staff, Torres himself taking the best horse. With savage indifference, Torres turned to Flores, and ordered him to retire. The unfortunate officer was conducted,

as before observed, to some secret place in the mountains, above Penjamo, and shot.

While Torres was committing these excesses, and flying about the country to elude the enemy, the siege of Xauxilla was steadily persevered in by Aguirre. It had held out three months; but the commandant, Lopez de Lara, and some of his officers, became alarmed. Foreseeing that the fort would be eventually reduced by starvation, and presuming that the same fate would attend the garrison that had befallen the patriots at the other forts, Lara thought it best to take measures in due season for the safety of himself and his party. He concealed his intentions from captains Christie and Devers, as he well knew that they would never consent to surrender the fort as long as it was tenable. Accordingly, he sent a secret overture to Aguirre, offering to deliver up the fort and *the two Anglo-Americans*. The overture was of course readily accepted. Lara and his associates then seized the persons of Mina's officers, and delivered them with the fort into the hands of the enemy. Aguirre displayed the magnanimity of his character, by adopting a line of conduct directly the reverse of that pursued by the barbarous Liñan and other Spanish chiefs. Disgusted with the perfidy of Lara, he upbraided him in the severest terms for his unmanly and dishonourable conduct to his allies the two Anglo-Americans, whom he immediately ordered to be treated with as much indulgence as was consistent with their safe keeping, and instead of shooting the troops that thus fell into his hands, he disarmed and set them at liberty.

Aguirre, after destroying the fort, and leaving a garrison in the village of Zacapo, to prevent its being reoccupied, returned to Valladolid, taking with him his two American prisoners. They were put into close confinement, and orders from the viceroy were received to put them to death. The generous Aguirre resisted the repeated orders of the viceroy to that effect; and finally, by persevering in their behalf, prevailed on the government to spare their lives. But, notwithstanding all his exertions to have them liberated and sent to the United States, they were removed to the capital, and subsequently transported to Europe.

The infuriated Torres was still pursuing his mad career, wandering about the country, arbitrarily seizing on every man's property, and burning towns and haciendas, under the pretext of depriving the enemy of the means of fortifying themselves in their progress through the country. The unfortunate town of Puruandiro underwent a second conflagration. Penjamo shared the same fate. Only one church was spared; and the inhabitants were forbidden to live among the ruins. In fine, this man's tyranny and excesses became so great, that the people in his comandancia at length hated and feared him more than they did the enemy.

The revolutionary government, in the meantime, had experienced several vicissitudes. After its seat had been removed from Xauxilla, it was established in the Tierra Caliente of Valladolid, where the enemy were not quite so numerous as in the Baxio, and where, from the natural advantages of the country, it could occupy positions that would be secure, or at least favourable for escape in the event of a surprise. Three of its members, either from disgust, or a conviction that their services could no longer be of any use to their country, signed and sent in an instrument of their resignation. Their names were,—*Aijala*, the president; *Loxero*, the secretary; and *Tercera*. Doctor San Martin proceeded to a small place called Zaratè, where *Don Antonio Cumplido*, *Don Pedro Villaseñor*, and *Don Pedro Bermeo*, were appointed *governantes*, in lieu of the others; and San Martin became president by reason of seniority.

The new government was encompassed with difficulties, which it was almost impossible to overcome; and, however great may have been its zeal to restore order, and give a new impulse to the cause of the revolution, an event occurred that prevented it from displaying its exertions; for, in the month of February, 1818, its members were surprised by a party of the enemy, who entered Zaratè, and took prisoner the president, San Martin; the infirmities of the old gentleman preventing him from escaping with his coadjutors. Cumplido resigned his place, under the impression that matters were in so desperate a state, as to render nugatory the establishment of any

regular government. Nevertheless, a form of civil authority was still kept up; and *Don José Pagola*, a worthy and intelligent patriot, and *Don Mariano Sanchez de Ariola*, were appointed to fill the places of San Martin and Cumplido. The two new members, with Don Pedro Villaseñor and Bermeo, therefore constituted the government; and Villaseñor was elected president.

The first subject that occupied the attention of the new government, was a dissension between Padre Torres and two of his officers, Don Andres Delgado and the brigadier Huerta. Both these officers commanded strong bodies of patriots. Delgado was at the head of the troops lately under the command of the murdered chief Flores. The conduct of Torres had become so insupportably outrageous and tyrannical, that Delgado and Huerta refused longer to submit to his authority, and called a meeting of the patriot chiefs, in the month of April, at Puruandiro, (at which Torres attended) for the purpose of nominating a new commander in chief. Colonel Don Juan Arago was named to fill the place of Torres. The padre sullenly retired from the meeting, accompanied by a few of the least respectable of the chiefs. He had the address to induce them to sign a petition to the government in his behalf, in which they declared their satisfaction with his conduct, and prayed that he might retain his station. The government, however, ratified the nomination of Arago, and appointed him commandant general of the province of Guanaxuato; permitting Torres to retire with all his honours, and to draw the pay corresponding with his rank. The appointment of colonel Arago was a most mortifying circumstance to the padre, who had always regarded him with envy.

The restless and ambitious priest was not, however, disposed to submit, without an effort to re-establish himself in the supreme command. On the 28th of April, having with him nearly fifteen hundred troops, including infantry, he received intelligence that a light division of the enemy, four hundred strong, under colonel Bustamante, was in the rancho *de los Frijoles*. As a means of regaining his popularity, he determined to attack the enemy. He took them completely by

surprise; but, notwithstanding, the action was most disgracefully lost, in consequence of his injudicious dispositions, and his own personally bad conduct. Scarcely had the engagement commenced, when the cavalry, from one of those unaccountable terrors with which they were occasionally seized, without entering into the action, fled. Torres, who was some distance in the rear, seeing the confusion, instead of attempting to rally, outstripped them in the flight. The infantry, thus abandoned, and left to contend, without even a hope of success, against overpowering odds, regarding their situation as desperate, formed under some trees, and, with determined valour, defended themselves until every individual, but one, was killed. The head of their commander, lieutenant Wolfe, was struck off, carried to Irapuato, and there elevated upon a pole.

As soon as Arago received his appointment from the government, he communicated the information to Torres; who answered, that the appointment was illegal, and would be resisted. Among the chiefs who had been instrumental in depriving Torres of his command, was Don Andres Delgado, well known to the Gachupins by the name of "El Giro." He was an Indian; and, though destitute of education, was particularly acute, and admirably calculated for partisan warfare. His courage was impetuous, and his activity astonished the enemy. He was only twenty-five years of age, and in his short military career had received twenty-two wounds. The dragoons of the Valle de Santiago, the finest and most efficient body of patriots in Mexico, were under his command. Few of the royal troops were equal to them in the field,—none exceeded them in courage. They were mounted on the finest horses the country could afford; and, unlike other bodies of patriots, were constantly in operation against the enemy, keeping that part of the Baxio about Salamanca and Zelaya in a state of continual alarm. El Giro, and his whole troop, hated and despised Torres; and they anxiously awaited an order to force him into obedience: but Arago was aware of the evil consequences attendant upon dissension, and therefore determined to try pacific measures, before he resorted to force.

Torres was attended by the ex-president, Don Ignacio Aÿala, a man full of duplicity and cunning, by whose advice he had opposed the recent changes. The force that Torres had under his immediate command was about one hundred and twenty men; but he was privately upheld by Don Encarnacion Ortiz and Don Miguel de Borja.

Mina's division was now nearly annihilated, *nine officers* and *four soldiers* only surviving. Those who had been with Torres, neglected and ill-treated, had, with one exception, left him: and that solitary individual, as soon as Arago received his preferment, abandoned the padre, and rejoined his comrades.

Arago, finding that all his attempts to bring Torres to an acknowledgment of his authority proved abortive, reluctantly had recourse to arms. Torres, unable to cope with the forces of Arago, fled to his friends, Borja and Ortiz. Conceiving that with their aid it was still possible for him to regain his lost power, he issued an arrogant and absurd proclamation, declaring the establishment of the government in the Tierra Caliente to be illegal, commanding obedience to Don Ignacio Aÿala as the only legitimate head of the civil authority, and calling on all true Americans to aid him in the vindication of his title. From Burras, the padre set out, with about three hundred men, furnished him by Borja and Ortiz, for Penjamo, of which place, Arago, as successor to the comandancia, had taken possession, in the month of July. Arago soon received a communication from these friends of Torres, stating, that a desire to arrange matters amicably, and not an intention of acting with hostility, had induced them to afford the padre an escort, and to accompany him themselves. After some correspondence, it was agreed, that at Surumuato, on the bank of the Rio Grande, with the river between the parties, the differences should be discussed. Arago, as well to avoid the effusion of blood, as to avert the fatal consequences which must arise to the cause of their country from these dissensions, and which had hitherto been its destruction, deemed it expedient to assent to the conference, although he was perfectly aware of the perfidious intentions of Torres and his partisans.

With two hundred men, he therefore repaired to Surumuato: but, soon after the discussion was opened, it became obvious that nothing short of reinstating the padre in his former power, and acknowledging the acts of the government to be illegal, would settle the dispute. Arago, after spending two days in fruitless attempts at pacification, perceiving that his opponents were only amusing him in order to gain time and receive reenforcements of troops, broke up the conference, by giving them a certain number of hours finally to make up their minds whether they would or would not obey the orders of the government. No answer being returned within the time, Arago immediately adopted measures to reduce the refractory padre and his partisans by force of arms. Accordingly, El Giro, with only a few of his brave Santiago dragoons, soon decided the matter. Gallantly swimming the river, about twenty of his men attacked their opponents, and routed them. Torres was saved from capture only by the speed of his horse. He fled to the mountains of Penjamo, where he collected some of the fugitives. His friends, finding that disaster only would attend the struggle, finally sent in their adherence to the government. Various skirmishes took place between the contending parties, in which Torres invariably came off with disgrace; but, notwithstanding all the exertions of Arago to obtain possession of his person, the wily priest eluded him, as he had formerly done the royalists. This contest between Arago and Torres was terminated by the advance of a division of royalists, in September, under the command of colonel Marquez Donallo, to Penjamo. A post was established in that pueblo, which cut off Torres from his places of retreat in the mountains and plains. The padre thenceforth found his situation daily becoming more desperate; and at length, in utter despair, he disbanded his few remaining troops, and, with his adviser Ayala and a few domestics, threw himself on the protection of the brothers Ortiz. They interceded with the government in his behalf; and, notwithstanding his previous infamous and treacherous conduct merited severe punishment, yet he was allowed to remain unmolested in that part of the country, on the express condition that he should neither directly nor indirectly interfere

in the public affairs. This condition was guarantied by Ortiz; and thus terminated the disgraceful career of this ambitious priest. In the month of June, last year, he was wandering among the mountains within the range of Don Encarnacion Ortiz, in the vicinity of San Felipe, eluding the pursuit of the royalists, and trembling for his safety even among his former friends. It was fortunate for him that he did not fall into the hands of El Giro: for such was the conviction of Mina's officers of his treachery towards their deceased general, and so exasperated were they at his shameful conduct with regard to themselves, that they certainly would have permitted him to have fallen a sacrifice to the vengeance of that chieftain and his men.

The situation of the patriots in the province of Guanaxuato was daily becoming more critical; but, although every pueblo of any importance was occupied by the royalists, still the patriots carried on an irregular warfare. They roamed among the mountains and through the plains, occasionally skirmishing with the enemy; but neither observing order among themselves, nor aiming at a combined plan of operations. With the exception of El Giro and his troop, they at length merited an appellation little better than that of banditti, so often applied to them by the royalists.

In the western Tierra Caliente, the cause of the patriots assumed a brighter aspect. The enemy had there steadily pursued the system adopted in Guanaxuato, of throwing bodies of troops into every pueblo: by which means, they had so far subdued opposition, as to flatter themselves that the pacification of the western part of the province of Valladolid would soon be accomplished, the more especially as they had compelled the patriots under the command of lieutenant general *Don Vicente Guerrero* to retire into the mountains near the shores of the Pacific ocean. This officer is one of those extraordinary men whom revolutions bring into notice. During the life, and after the death, of general Morelos, Guerrero had distinguished himself by his intrepidity and activity. On one occasion, in the mountains of the Misteca, with only about one hundred and forty Misteca Indians under his orders, whose

only weapons consisted of clubs and slings, he greatly elevated himself by brilliant exploits.

The royalists were frequently careless in their encampments at night, and particularly in the Misteca, where they knew that Guerrero had not an armed force to attack them. A party of three hundred royalists having encamped a few miles from where Guerrero was stationed with his Indians, he proposed to his men to make an attack on the enemy during a rainy and stormy night. The plan was agreed on, and executed with such silence and celerity, that Guerrero was in the midst of the encampment before the enemy were aware of his approach. The royalists were panic-struck, and attempted to fly: many of them were killed, and the whole of their arms, baggage, &c. &c. fell into the hands of Guerrero. This, and other similar exploits, had made him renowned among the patriots of the Misteca, but towards the latter part of 1817, he had been so severely pressed by superior numbers of the royalists, that he was obliged to retire from the Misteca, and, with a servant, passing through the lines of the enemy, reached the Tierra Caliente of Valladolid; where, after encountering various vicissitudes in the fall of the following year, with eighty men he surprised a strong party of four hundred of the enemy, destroying nearly the whole of them. This exploit threw some arms into his power, with which he lighted up a flame that rapidly spread over the Tierra Caliente; and, before the enemy could recover from the surprise which this new antagonist created, he attacked their different posts, beat them in detail, and roused the drooping spirits of the patriots in the western parts of Mexico, as well as of Valladolid. The viceroy, alarmed at this rapid and unexpected progress of the patriots, transmitted orders to adopt the most vigorous measures against Guerrero: accordingly, brigadier Negrete was ordered to advance with a strong division to the Tierra Caliente, threatening at once to annihilate Guerrero and his party. In conformity with his orders, Negrete proceeded to the village of *Churumucoo*, situated on the right bank of a river which flows from the east, and unites with the Marquez near the village; the junction of these rivers forming the *Zacatula*.

He found the patriot chief posted on the opposite side of the river; but, not deeming it prudent to attack him, and finding that he could not long maintain his position for the want of provisions and the destructive influence of the climate, he made a retrograde movement, and, much to the annoyance of the royalist subjects, returned to Valladolid without achieving any thing.

At this period, Don Miguel de Borja was chosen by some part of the troops of Xalpa, for their commander in chief; to accept of which station it was necessary for him to give up his comandancia of Burras.

The occupation of Penjamo by the enemy had deprived Arago of those pecuniary resources on which he had calculated to raise and equip forces; and, believing that by good management ample resources might be obtained at Burras, and that great advantages would result from the communication he could establish with the patriotic inhabitants of Guanaxuato, from the vicinity of that city to Burras, he took the command of that district. His expectations, however, were at the outset frustrated; for, on investigation, he found that his predecessor had levied so many contributions on the unfortunate farmers, that they had little left, and as he was averse to the system of exactions which Torres, Borja, and others, had pursued, he was compelled to depend on a few individuals for the urgent supplies of his few troops. A short time before Borja gave up the command of Burras, he had received from the inhabitants twelve months' revenue in anticipation; which circumstance, united with those already mentioned, rendered it absolutely impracticable for Arago to realize any of the plans he had previously contemplated.

Before Borja left Burras, an event occurred which filled with sorrow the breast of every true patriot. Don José Maria Liceaga, whom we have before mentioned as a distinguished and stanch defender of his country's rights, was treacherously murdered. Strong grounds exist for believing that Borja was the principal instigator of this murder. Liceaga had retired from public life, and resided on his hacienda in

the district of Burras. Journeying along the high road, he met a party of Borja's men, headed by one of his captains. Without any previous explanation, they furiously attacked him: he attempted to save himself by flight, but a shot from Borja's officer brought him to the ground, when he was instantly put to death. Borja has endeavoured to vindicate this horrid deed, by alleging that Liceaga was proceeding to the town of Irapuato, to deliver himself up to the enemy, and to accept the royal pardon.

All who knew Liceaga pronounced this to be a calumnious accusation. His undeviating adherence to the cause of the revolution, through all its vicissitudes, his refusal of the repeated overtures of the enemy for reconciliation, and the firmness of his character, displayed on numerous trying occasions, made the accusation of Borja appear as absurd as it was unfounded. The fact, however, we understood to be, that Borja had, some weeks before this event, demanded one thousand dollars from Liceaga, which was accordingly furnished him; and, in order to avoid its repayment, as well as to get rid of a man who constantly expressed himself hostile to such lawless proceedings, he resolved on his destruction, and effected it in the manner we have related.

The patriots shuddered at the tale; for, although Liceaga, by his love of order and strength of character, had become obnoxious to the military chiefs, yet by the people in general he was respected.

About the time this melancholy circumstance took place, the forces under Guerrero were daily augmenting, and the political horizon in that part of the theatre of the revolution once more assumed an aspect favourable to the patriots. Three of Mina's officers, who had retired to the *Cañadas de Huango*, eleven leagues north of the city of Valladolid, placing themselves under the orders of brigadier Huerta, were authorized by him to organize a body of infantry and cavalry. Huerta, like most of the chiefs we have before described, had been raised, by the vicissitudes of the revolution, to a situation which he was totally unqualified to fill. He was illiterate,

vicious, and jealous of his superiors; but at the same time he was daringly brave, and ready to undertake any project, however hazardous. He assumed the title of commandant general of the province of Valladolid. We believe that he meant well to his country, but his extreme ignorance prevented him from being of much service; and, like Torres, he could not bear the sight of any man whom he thought likely to interfere with his ambition. He viewed the brilliant successes of Guerrero with a jealous eye; and although the latter was extremely anxious to obtain the co-operation of all the patriot chiefs, he could not accomplish it with Huerta.

Colonel Bradburn (one of the three officers who had retired to the Cañadas de Huango) was assiduously engaged in raising and organizing a body of infantry and cavalry, relying on the promises which had been made him by Huerta, of being furnished with every thing he wanted. Bradburn and his two comrades found recruits flocking in to them from all directions; barracks were erected; an armoury and powder manufactory were established; arrangements were made to procure clothing from the enemy's towns; and every thing went on prosperously, until the moment arrived when the new troops were to receive arms. Huerta, under various pretexts, withheld them. Bradburn was some time before he could penetrate the cause of Huerta's strange conduct; but at length he discovered that it arose from jealousy. Huerta, on seeing what he thought a body of well trained troops under the command of Bradburn, conceived it possible that the latter would co-operate with, or enter into the views of, Guerrero, and thereby diminish the authority which he himself was aiming to obtain. This was the real cause of his refusing Bradburn the necessary supplies.

Matters continued in this state for upwards of two months, in the Cañadas, and although the enemy were within a few leagues, and four times superior in numbers, yet Bradburn, with a hundred men wretchedly armed, held them in check. At length the enemy determined to destroy him, and in March, 1819, advanced with fifteen hundred men, under the command

of Don Vicente Lara. Against this formidable force resistance was useless. Bradburn retreated for two days; but, being closely pursued in the mountains, his party was destroyed, with the exception of about thirty who made their escape. The prisoners were conducted to the neighbouring pueblo of Chucandiro, and there instantly shot.

Huerta could at that time have mustered four hundred cavalry; and as he had received timely advice of the movements of the enemy, could have reenforced the little party; instead of which, he quietly permitted it to be completely broken up. His subsequent conduct to Mina's officers was disgraceful, and serves to confirm what we have before stated, that during the last three years, the patriot chiefs were generally ignorant, incapable, and licentious men, who studied only their separate interests, to the ruin of their country. Under such unfortunate circumstances, it is almost incredible that the royalists did not completely quell the insurrection; and that they have not been able so to do, arises from the general hostile feeling of the people, and the occasional appearance of such men as Don Vicente Guerrero.

The conduct of Huerta, and the distracted state of the patriots in Valladolid, prevented the patriot government from possessing a place of security in which to hold their sessions. The late president, Don José Pagola, and his secretary, were taken prisoners by surprise, and shot. Don José Castañeda was appointed in the place of Pagola, and the presidency devolved on Don Pedro Villaseñor. The government removed to a place called *Las Valzas*, near the village of Churumucoo, adjacent to the conflux of the Rio Grande and the Marquez. Here it considered itself secure from surprise; and confided in the vigilance and abilities of general Guerrero, with whom they now resolved to co-operate in exertions to give to the cause of the revolution a new aspect.

The enemy, in the upper parts of Valladolid, had fortified themselves at Puruandiro, at Chucandiro, and at several other places. Huerta's troops were daily abandoning him, and some of them had accepted the royal pardon. The famous El Giro

had been surprised, taken prisoner, and shot. The royalists were therefore less annoyed, in that part of the country, than they had been for a long time previous.

The revolutionists were in no condition to carry on a series of harassing operations. Their system of defence, however, was such, that they suffered little loss: their guerilla parties were still numerous: in the rainy season, they retired to the mountains, and there recruited their horses and repaired their arms; on the return of the dry season, they descended into the plains, and attacked the enemy with renewed vigour.

In the month of July of last year, the revolution may be considered as having reached a lower ebb than at any previous period since the commencement of the struggle. But the royalists were very far from being in an unmolested state: they were still obliged to keep within their fortified places. The patriots still continued to possess the plains in the undermentioned parts of the country, and in fact were masters of the country up to the very walls of the fortified towns.

In the intendancy of Guanaxuato, there were still, under various patriot chiefs, at least, men	1,000
In the Tierra Fria and Caliente of Valladolid,	1,500
Over an extensive surface in the intendancy of Mexico, - - - - - - - -	2,000
Bordering on Guadalaxara and Valladolid, near the lake of Chapala, - - - - - -	500
On the coast of the Pacific ocean, in the province of Mexico, under the orders of general Guerrero and the brigadier Mondesdeoca, all determined troops, and principally infantry,	1,400
	6,400

In the foregoing statement, we conceive that the numbers are within the actual force of the patriots bearing arms; and, in the estimation, we do not include that portion of the peasantry whom circumstances have compelled to a pretended neutrality, but who are ripe for revolt, whenever they again behold the patriot cause assume a favourable aspect.

We omit making any observations relative to the state of the other intendancies, because there the royalists have succeeded, by military presence, in causing a momentary pacification. By referring the reader to what we have previously remarked on the character and feelings of the population of the great intendancies of Vera Cruz, Puebla, and Oaxaca, it is obvious that the present tranquillity is a mere temporary calm, liable at any moment to be succeeded by a revolutionary tempest.

Various writers, within the last seven years, have published the most gloomy and absurd stories relative to the revolutions of Mexico and South America; and on no other subject have the public been more egregiously misled. Among the books abounding in false statements, none is more conspicuous than a work which was republished in Philadelphia, in 1819, entitled "A Descriptive, Historical, and Geographical Account of Spanish America, &c. &c. By R. H. Bonnycastle, Captain in the Corps of Royal Engineers." So long as captain Bonnycastle exercises the office of a *plagiarist*, in faithfully copying from Humboldt, Clavigero, and other celebrated authors, he is excusable for the errors of his statements: but when he undertakes to give us a detail of the present contest in Spanish America, with his speculations and predictions, and sentiments upon political subjects, he must bear upon his own shoulders the charge of writing with the servility of a Spanish stipendiary, instead of the impartiality and manliness which ought to characterize a British officer; and of displaying the grossest ignorance of facts which would scarcely have escaped the observation of any one who had paid the least attention to the affairs of Spanish America. For instance,—

In page 316, he informs us, that "Mina, *who had been concerned in the Caracas revolution*, undertook an expedition against New Spain, where he was taken prisoner, and *beheaded, in Mexico.*"

In page 243, after having given a confused account of the insurrection at Caracas, he states, that Miranda was taken, and *beheaded.*

In page 315, he eulogizes the ferocious *Boves*, a man whose

career of horrid cruelties in Caracas causes even the royalists to blush that he was a Spaniard.

In page 317, speaking of the state of the revolution in 1816 and 1817, he tells us, that "In *New Grenada*, *Florida*, *Quito*, *Peru*, and *Mexico*, *the insurgents have very little sway*."

In page 57, he gives the most ludicrous and false account of the situation of the insurgents in New Spain; and gravely states, that "*Neither the Indians nor people of the interior take any part of the struggle*."

In page 348, speaking of Buenos Ayres and Chili, he states that "the insurgent privateers still *dare to show their flag in the Pacific*."

In several parts of his book, he asserts that the royal authority is generally restored throughout Spanish America, and that *he* has not the least doubt of the ability of Spain to preserve her sovereignty over all those dominions.

Should his book ever pass to a second edition, we advise the captain to correct the errors we have noticed, and candidly to confess that events have occurred totally at variance with his confident predictions.

We have thus conducted our reader through some of the prominent scenes of the Mexican revolution, up to July, 1819: we have given a faithful detail of the daring achievements and misfortunes of the gallant Miña and his little band :* we have shown what a few foreigners did actually accomplish in Mexico: and, finally, we have endeavoured to convey a correct idea of the state of society in that kingdom, and to exhibit the very precarious tenure by which Spain there maintains her authority. The picture we have drawn of Padre Torres and other of the patriot chiefs may possibly induce a belief that it is difficult for the patriots to obtain proper leaders to guide them to victory: but the reader should bear in mind, that the men with whom Mina was unfortunately obliged to co-operate rose to their stations during seasons of anarchy and confusion: they had been heaved to the surface of the revolution by its currents and

* The survivers of Mina's division, still in Mexico, are, colonels Bradburn, Arago, and Don Pablo Erdozain, captain Don Antonio Mandietta, Mr. Gerhard Honhorst, two soldiers, and two coloured boys.

agitated waters, and were no way else distinguished than by their ambition, licentiousness, and ignorance. Should Mexico ever be invaded by a respectable foreign force, with a view of co-operating with the people in the establishment of their independence, there will not be found any deficiency of worthy and able Creole officers, willing to lend their exertions to the cause of their country, as well from among those who have formerly headed the insurgents, as from those who have hitherto been in the royal service; and, with respect to the population in general, legions of friends to independence will be found in every province of Old Mexico.

The royalists, in the intendancies of Guanaxuato, Valladolid, Mexico, La Puebla, and Vera Cruz, are walking among ashes still warm from the recent eruptions;—they are passing a precarious existence, surrounded by volcanoes. The spirit of hostility to the Spanish government is smothered but for a season; and when the flames of resistance shall again burst forth in those provinces, an ocean of blood will not extinguish them. It will moreover be difficult to prevent the revolutionary fire that is now burning along the shores of the Pacific ocean from spreading into the interior. The patriot general Guerrero and his partisans occupy a part of New Spain from which it will be almost impossible for the royalists to dislodge them. This chieftain has his principal establishment at the *Orilla de Zacatula*, situated on the right bank of the river of that name, about a league and a half from its mouth. The river Zacatula discharges itself into the Pacific ocean, about the latitude of eighteen degrees north: it has two mouths, about a league distant from each other; both these are obstructed by bars, but the northernmost one affords an entrance for boats. About sixty miles east-south-east from this river, is the harbour of Siguatanejo, which, for beauty, spaciousness, and security, is exceeded by none on the shores of the Pacific ocean. The Spaniards, fearful that it should become known to foreigners, have rigorously prohibited all traffic whatever at this port. Lord Anson, we believe, was the first and has been the only foreigner that ever entered it. About fifteen miles north from Zacatula, there is likewise an excel-

lent bay (ensanada) called *Petacalco*. The anchorage therein is convenient and secure, and the water is smooth throughout the greater part of the year. The sea breeze sets in regularly at eight o'clock in the morning, and continues until sun-set, when it is succeeded by a land breeze, which usually blows until six or seven o'clock next morning. The whole line of this coast, from Zacatula down to Siguatanejo, is at present under the control of Guerrero. The positions he has chosen are not only secure from surprise by the enemy, but that at Orilla is even capable of sustaining a formidable siege. It is defended on the south-east by a deep, wide, and rapid river; and between it and a place called *Colima*, is a wilderness impassable by an army. From Tierra Fria, it can only be approached by a road on the right bank of the river, which road passes over mountains for nearly thirty leagues, every mile of which offers defiles where one hundred resolute men could arrest the march of one thousand. In fact, the country occupied by Guerrero is the most favourable part of New Spain for defensive operations; and so long as this experienced chief remains on the defensive, it will be almost impracticable for his enemies to subdue him. His advanced posts extend to Las Valzas. The country, being thinly settled, affords not the means of subsistence for an army of royalists; while the patriots, to whom privations are common, have a sufficiency. Guerrero has adopted the plan of collecting the cattle into a herd, so that, on the approach of the enemy, he has only to drive them to the rear, thus cutting off the means of subsistence from his opponents. The latter must therefore receive their supplies from a great distance, which almost precludes the possibility of attempting a formal siege of Guerrero's strong hold, the only manner in which he can be dislodged.

The people of all that part of the province of Mexico are remarkable for their hatred to the Spaniards; and in the adjoining provinces of La Puebla and Oaxaca, the whole of the population along the coast of the Pacific ocean are ready to co-operate with Guerrero. The inhabitants of the mountains of the Misteca are particularly attached to him; and, should he make his future advances in that direction, he would be

cordially supported. It is probable, however, that Guerrero will remain at his present position on the river Zacatula, until some favourable circumstances occur in the other provinces, or until he receive a supply of arms and munitions of war.

Should the cruizers of Buenos Ayres and Chili direct their attention to that part of the coast of the Pacific ocean within the jurisdiction of Guerrero's command, they could, with the aid of the latter, fortify Siguatanejo, and make it a place of rendezvous, of high importance to themselves, and of very serious annoyance to the enemy. By the adoption of such a measure, the whole commerce of the coast from Guaquil to Acapulco and San Blas could be annihilated, and the trade between Manilla and Acapulco obstructed or destroyed. We presume the reason why such an attempt has not yet been made, must arise from the want of information in the governments of Buenos Ayres and Chili, with regard to the position occupied by Guerrero, and the character of the population of the whole range of the coast.

Two thousand troops, with an extra supply of ten thousand muskets, landing on the coast near Guerrero's position, and uniting with that chieftain, would decide the fate of Mexico in less than six months; and should those troops be Creoles of *Chili*, of *Buenos Ayres*, or of the republic of *Colombia*, they would be received with joy and gratitude by the Mexicans, and would moreover be their fittest auxiliaries.

These observations, combined with the facts which we have related in the preceding chapters, will make it obvious to the reader that the sovereignty of Spain over Mexico is suspended to a fragile thread, and that the emancipation of the latter from Spanish thraldom is an event that must take place at no distant day.

We shall close our Memoirs of the Revolution, in the following chapter, by briefly noticing the cruelties committed by the Spanish authorities in Mexico and South America during the last nine years.

CHAPTER XII.

Cruelty a predominant feature in Spanish history; exemplified by a brief view of the conduct of Spain in Europe, and by the horrors committed, by her authorities, in Mexico and South America, since the year 1810—*Reflections.*

THE scenes of cruelty which we have related in the course of our Memoirs of the Mexican revolution, may startle some of our readers, and incline them to doubt the correctness of our statements. We therefore deem it necessary to state, that in almost every instance which we have noticed of the atrocities perpetrated by the royalists, we have derived our information from the records of facts, either acknowledged or never denied by the Spanish government, and generally obtained from Spanish official documents, published in Spanish America, and in the Madrid Gazette. In the early years of the present revolutions in Spanish America, the viceroys, captains general, and nearly all the royal officers, appear to have emulated each other in vituperating the American character, and in boasting of the inhuman deeds they had performed. They appear to have been regardless of the opinions of the civilized world, and exulting in that which should have caused the deepest shame, have placed on record the bloody deeds performed by their orders. But while they have thus set at defiance the judgments of the present generation, they have created a tribunal in the posterity of America, that will pass upon them a severe but righteous condemnation.

An inquiry into the causes which have distinguished Spain among the nations of Europe for deeds of horror, may deserve the attention of the future philosopher and statesman. The chivalrous exploits of the ancient Castilians, the generosity and nobleness which characterized the Spaniard of the olden time, have been the theme of admiration for many

centuries; but an attentive examination of their history will convince us, that even in the era of their brightest glory, *cruelty* was a prominent trait in their character. In vain have they styled themselves the most Christian nation on earth,—in vain have they called themselves the favoured people of God,—in vain have they crowded their cities, towns, and villages, with temples dedicated to religion, and spread legions of priests over their territories,—in vain do they perpetually ring in our ears their pre-eminent piety, when all these advantages have been insufficient to check their propensities to the odious vice of cruelty, which, even among savages and Pagans, excites our abhorrence and reprobation. Does this arise from physical causes, or does it originate in that vindictive and relentless spirit which has ever characterized ecclesiastical despotism, whether existing among Christians or Pagans?

In all the wars on the European continent in which Spain has taken a part, her officers and soldiers have been distinguished for their ferocity and cruelty, and particularly in those of the reign of Philip III. It was in that monarch's reign, that Spain prosecuted a war in the Netherlands, accompanied by scenes of licentiousness and barbarity which cause her name, even to this day, to be execrated by the Dutch people; and it was during his reign, about the year 1609, that unparalleled scenes of horror were committed, in the expulsion of the Moors from Spain. These people had lived in the country eight hundred years; and were distinguished from the Spaniards by their language, religion, character, and manners. After a series of bloody wars, the Spaniards at length overcame and reduced them to a state of vassalage, when the greater part of them submitted to receive Christian baptism. They were an industrious and frugal people; and, while the Spanish villages all over Castile and Andalusia were falling into decay, those of the Moors increased and flourished. In consequence of this, their numbers rapidly augmented; and the Spaniards entertained fears, that if some remedy was not speedily applied, the Moors might regain the ascendency they had formerly possessed. The two schemes that presented themselves to the Christian cabinet of Philip III., were, to

put the whole of them to the sword, or to *transport them to foreign parts*. There were numerous advocates for the indiscriminate slaughter of these unfortunate people: but it was apprehended that such a deed would fill all Europe with indignation, and therefore it was resolved to expel the Moors from the kingdom.

Among the ecclesiastics of those days, who bore a distinguished part in this act of violence and injustice, was *Don Juan de Ribera*, patriarch of Antioch and archbishop of Valentia, an aged prelate, highly venerated for his *piety* and learning, and eulogized by the Spanish and Italian historians as one of the brightest ornaments that ever adorned the Christian church. The memorial addressed to the king, on this occasion, by this so much lauded patriarch, breathes in every line the darkest spirit of fanaticism, and is the most outrageous violation of the principles of humanity and Christianity that was ever penned. According to the bishop's doctrine, even the Moors who had been baptized and converted to Christianity, were still to be considered as "dangerous heretics." He carried his intolerance and blasphemy to such an extravagant length, as to state, in his memorial; "In baptizing the Moresco children, therefore, our consciences are greatly disturbed with the apprehension that we are guilty of violating the commandment of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has prohibited the giving of holy things to dogs, and the casting of pearls before swine."

It was finally determined by Philip, with the advice of all his counsellors spiritual and temporal, that the Moors were to be considered as obstinate heretics, and apostates from the faith, whom the king, if he thought fit, might justly punish with *death;* that therefore there could be no room to doubt the lawfulness of the milder punishment of *banishment;* and accordingly it was resolved that they should be immediately expelled the kingdom.

The manner in which this unfeeling sentence was carried into execution, is calculated to thrill the heart with horror. We shall content ourselves with exhibiting a brief outline of the horrid enormities which ensued.

By the edict of expulsion, all the men, women, and children, were commanded, under pain of death, to be ready, within *three days*, to repair to the sea-ports for embarkation. All their effects were confiscated; and death was pronounced against those who should attempt to conceal any part thereof. The numbers that were massacred on their route to the coast, and that perished on their voyage to Barbary, have been variously represented by different historians, not one of whom makes the number less than *one hundred thousand* men, women, and children. They were barbarously murdered at sea, by the officers and crews of the ships which they had freighted. There are instances recorded of inhuman cruelties exercised on this injured and defenceless people, surpassing in atrocity whatever is related in sacred or profane history. Men were butchered in presence of their wives and children, and the latter afterwards thrown alive into the sea. Some of the females, on account of their beauty, were preserved alive for a short time, to glut the brutal lust of the murderers of their husbands or brothers, and then either slaughtered or committed to the waves. Such were the deeds of horror which were revealed, upon the trials to which these inhuman barbarians were brought, in consequence of their quarrelling with themselves concerning the division of the spoil.

The fate of those who reached the coast of Barbary was not less deplorable. They were furiously attacked by the Bedouin Arabs, a wild banditti, who subsist by plunder. Of six thousand Moors, who set out together from Conastal, a town in the neighbourhood of Oran, with an intention of going to Algiers, only one person survived to reach that place.

Had these unfortunate people been exterminated by the sword, as was at first proposed, it would have been an act of mercy, compared with the fate to which they were actually doomed; but their sufferings, so far from exciting commiseration in the authors of their calamities, were made a subject of exultation; and the act was pronounced by the Catholic clergy to be acceptable in the sight of God, and a signal instance of divine judgment against heresy.

In some parts of Spain, where the Moors either resisted the order for expulsion, or could not comply with it under the peremptory terms prescribed, they were butchered in the most horrible manner. No mercy was shown to age or sex; while rolling in the dust, imploring mercy of their savage conquerors, they were indiscriminately slain. Some had sheltered themselves among the woods and rocks; but Philip fixed a price upon their heads, and soldiers were sent to hunt for them as for beasts of prey. Scarcely an individual escaped. Those who were taken alive in the mountains of Valentia, were conducted to the city; and, after suffering every species of mockery and insult, were put to death by excruciating tortures. Such of our readers as wish to examine the details of these dreadful transactions, are referred to Watson's History of the Reign of Philip III. and to contemporary historians.

A government that could sanction such scenes of atrocity, and a people who could rejoice in the barbarous spectacles of an *auto de fé*, and in the other horrors of the tribunal of the Inquisition, were of course prepared for the execution of all those inhuman acts which have taken place in the New World since the epoch of its discovery, and more especially of those enormities which have occurred during the present revolution in Spanish America, which it has become our duty to notice in the present chapter.

We shall first recapitulate the cruelties that have been exercised in Mexico. The proclamations and decrees of viceroy Vanegas outrage every principle of humanity and civilized warfare; and his despatches to the court of Madrid, which have been published in the Gazette of that city, contain little else than an account of the number of insurgents he has slain in battle, or *murdered after he had taken them prisoners*. Commandant *Revollo*, in his official despatch to the viceroy, *recommends the promotion of a serjeant for having slain a nephew* among the insurgents. Commandant *Bustamante* recommends, in like manner, *a dragoon for having killed his kneeling brother*. General *Truxillo* boasts of *having murdered the bearers of a flag of truce*. General *Calleja*, on several occasions, writes in the most exulting style, of *the thousands*

he had butchered, while on their knees imploring his mercy. In the action of Zamora, the royal commander states, that *all the prisoners were deliberately despatched.* General *Cruz*, in almost every despatch to the viceroy, boasts of *the number of prisoners he had shot*, and of *the towns and villages he had reduced to ashes.* Captain *Blanco* states, that *his troops, eager for blood, destroyed persons of every age and sex, until no more victims could be found. Don Caetano Quintero*, in his despatch of the 29th of August, 1811, says, that in the attack of Amoladeras, which continued two hours, *no quarter was given.* Commandant *Villaescusa* states the manner in which *he entrapped the bearer of a flag of truce, and subsequently murdered him.* General Calleja issues proclamations and edicts of the most sanguinary nature, and carries into execution all his threats. The burning of towns, the butchery of prisoners, and the annihilation of a defenceless population, are the perpetual themes of this monster, in his official despatches. Yet, as we have before stated, for these eminent proofs of his loyalty to his beloved monarch, he was promoted to the rank of Mariscal de Campo, made viceroy of Mexico, decorated with the cross of Charles III., and was last year nominated to the command of that expedition which was intended for new scenes of butchery in America, but which the influence of justice and regeneration has baffled.

It must be understood, that the preceding outline of horrors committed in Mexico by the royalists, is only a very small part of the tragic scenes yet brought to light: they are merely a part of those which have been confessed in public documents even by the royalists, and which we have casually met with, in various writers, prior to the year 1814.

While we were in Mexico, we carefully examined the official papers, respecting the cruelties referred to in the work of William Walton Esq. published in London in 1814, entitled "An Exposé of the Dissensions of Spanish America;" and we found that they corresponded with Mr. Walton's statements. But when we reflect on the vast number of dreadful acts which were related to us by individuals who were witnesses of the transactions, and of which not the least ac-

count has yet been published, we feel justified in asserting, that not one-eighth of the long catalogue of cruelties committed by the royalists in Mexico, has yet been exhibited to public notice.

We perused a manuscript history of the Mexican Revolution up to 1816, written by a distinguished Creole, (whose name honour and prudence forbid us to disclose,) which contained a minute detail of the royal massacres and devastations. The enormities that were there related have no parallel on the page of history. The writer of that manuscript, trembling for his life in case such a document should fall into the hands of the royalists, committed it to the flames; fortunate was it for him that he did so; for, a few days afterwards, he was under the necessity of delivering up his person to the royalists. He still lives, and we hope will yet have an opportunity of exhibiting to the world a faithful history of the revolution; for, until such a work shall appear, civilized nations will not be able to form a complete opinion of the sufferings which the Mexican people have experienced, during their struggle for freedom.

Having thus noticed the bloody scenes acted by Spanish policy in Mexico, let us take a cursory view of those which have taken place in other parts of Spanish America.

Venezuela, New Grenada and Quito, at present constituting the republic of Colombia, have been the theatres of greater horrors, if possible, than those committed in Mexico. The reader, overcome with disgust, would turn from the page that contained the recital of but a thousandth part of the executions which have taken place at *Carthagena*, *Mompos*, *Santa Fé de Bogotá*, *Popayan*, *Quito*, *Caracas*, *Barcelona*, *Cumana*, *La Guayra*, *Puerto Cavello*, *Valencia*, and other cities of those countries. Of the extent of those horrors, some idea may be formed, when we state, that, *within the last nine years*, it appears, *from Spanish official documents*, that *there have been sacrificed in cold blood*, *by hanging*, *shooting and other modes of execution*, *eighty thousand prisoners*, in those three provinces. We must bear in mind, that in these eighty thousand victims are not included many thousand others who were put to death by a brutal soldiery, whenever they visited a village

the sentiments of whose inhabitants they suspected to be favourable to the insurgents. How many inoffensive men, women, and children, have been slaughtered, of whose fate no further notice has been taken, in the official despatches of the royal commanders, than in the following words: "*The town or pueblo of* ———, *with all its inhabitants, has disappeared from the face of the earth!!!*"

In June, 1816, the Spanish general Morillo entered the city of Santa Fé de Bogotá, then called the capital of New Grenada. In one of his despatches from thence, which was intercepted in its passage to Spain, he boldly describes the measures which he had pursued, in the following words: "*every person, of either sex, capable of reading or writing, were treated as rebels.*" "*By thus cutting off all who could read or write, he hoped effectually to arrest the spirit of revolution.*" The authenticity of such an extraordinary official communication might admit of some doubt, if the monster who penned it had not in reality executed the savage deeds therein announced. Every person in Santa Fé and in Carthagena, who had been distinguished by their learning or their eminence in science, or who had held stations in the provincial administrations, and in the congress; with their *wives and daughters*, were thrown into loathsome dungeons. Six hundred of them were hanged or shot, and their bodies exhibited on gibbets. All the *females* who were accomplished in literature, of which there were many, suffered the same fate. The learned and benevolent Mutis, of whom Humboldt has spoken in terms of admiration, Lozano and Caldos, who were his disciples in philosophy, a distinguished chemist, and several other men of science, who had not borne arms, nor held any public trust, were put to death by order of Morillo. Some of the females were indebted for the preservation of their lives merely to the fatigues of the executioners. These women were afterwards exiled. Nearly the whole population of Santa Fé supplicated Morillo to spare the life of the venerable Mutis; but the savage was inexorable, openly avowing, *that learned Creoles were more dangerous enemies than the insurgents in arms.* Yet, after having committed such acts of vin-

dictive cruelty, "this Spanish apostle of pacification; this practical and preventative philanthropist; this monster of inhumanity; this pillar of the Spanish constitution;" this very same Morillo, issues a proclamation from his head-quarters in Caracas, the 12th of June last, addressed to the emigrants from Costa Firme, in which, after reminding them of his *incessant efforts* for the *pacification* of that country, since his arrival in 1815, he assures them that his *sole object has been*, and continues to be, that of *rendering them happy!* In apprizing them of his determination to return to his native country, he expresses his ardent desire, that, before his departure, he may be enabled to give them a *fraternal embrace;* and, for that purpose, conjures them earnestly to hasten their arrival at Venezuela, that he may not be deprived of that great satisfaction, it being the only consolation remaining to him, on the eve of this *cruel separation!*

To what emigrants, it may be asked, can this pacific overture be addressed? Few are they indeed, unless those be included, "who, under the *special passport* of Morillo, have emigrated to another world, but whose spirits are heard around their tombs."

We are still more astonished in beholding this same Don Pablo Morillo, who for five years has lavished upon the people of the Costa Firme the grossest epithets and execrations, suddenly addressing, for the first time, on the 17th of the same month, a letter to the Congress of Colombia, on the subject of his proclamation, and styling them, with the most consummate hypocrisy and adulation, "Their *High Mightinesscs*, the Congress assembled at Guyana." In this letter, after beginning with "*High and Mighty Lords*," he dares to insult them by advancing the gross falsehood, that the present constitution of Spain was adopted by the universal suffrage of the *representatives of both hemispheres;* and informs them, that he had received "positive orders, from *the constitutional monarch of the Spains*, to enter into a just and generous accommodation, which shall reunite all the family, in order to enjoy the advantages of their political regeneration, and to put an end to the fatal effects of a division, generated by a desire to be free from

oppression, that, by a false calculation, had been considered peculiar to those countries, notwithstanding that it had been transcendental to all the empire."

The brief view we have taken of the murders committed on the unfortunate Creoles, in the three provinces before mentioned, we are well convinced embraces but a small part of the numbers which have perished; and were we to say, that *one hundred and fifty thousand*, instead of *eighty thousand*, have been deliberately slaughtered by the royalists, we conceive that we should still be short of the actual number of victims.

Similar scenes of carnage have taken place in the provinces of La Plata and Chili; and, although we have no recent accounts of such events, yet we find enough to make us shudder, on perusing the eloquent manifesto, addressed to all nations, by the Congress of the provinces of Rio de la Plata, dated at Buenos Ayres, the 25th of October, 1816, from which we make the following extracts:—

"The town of Cochabamba was taken, and delivered up to plunder for three hours. The commandant of the royal troops, Goyeneche, entering, with one-half of his cavalry, the gate of the principal church, the host being exposed, killed with a stroke of his sword the fiscal Lopez Andreu, who presented it, trembling with terror. He ordered the respectable governor intendant, Antesana, to be shot; and, observing with complacency from the balcony of his house this iniquitous assassination, ferociously cried out to his troops not to shoot the victim in the head, as it was wanted to be stuck upon a pike. When it was severed from the body by his command, the headless trunk was dragged through the streets, while at the same time the brutal soldiers were permitted to dispose at pleasure of the lives and properties of the inhabitants, during many successive days. Wherever this Nero went, death and devastation marked his path. A gesture, a clouded visage, an indiscreet word, or a tear stealing down the cheek, was a crime of state. The royalists have adopted the dreadful system of putting men to death indiscriminately, for no other purpose than to diminish our numbers; and, on entering our towns, have been known to massacre even the unfortunate market people, driving them

to the public square in groups, and shooting them down with cold-blooded, wanton cruelty. The villages of Chuquisaca and Cochabamba have more than once been theatres of this shocking barbarity.

"They have compelled our soldiers, taken prisoners, to serve against their wills in the ranks of their armies, carrying the officers in irons to distant outposts, where it was impossible for them to preserve health for a single year, while others have been starved to death in dungeons, and many have been forced to labour on the public works. They have wantonly shot the bearers of flags of truce, and have committed the utmost horrors upon chiefs after their surrender, and other principal personages, notwithstanding the humanity that had been shown by us to those prisoners who fell into our hands. In proof of this assertion, we need only mention the deputy Matos of Potosi, captain general Pumacagua, general Angulo, and his brother, the commandant Muñecas, and other partisan chiefs, shot in cold blood, many days after they had surrendered themselves prisoners.

"In the district of Valle Grande, they indulged themselves in the brutal sport of cutting off the ears of the natives, and transmitting a pannier full of them to head-quarters. They afterwards destroyed the town by fire; burnt about forty populous villages of Peru; and took a hellish pleasure in shutting up the inhabitants in their houses before setting them on fire, in order that their unhappy victims might be burnt alive.

"They had not only shown themselves implacable in murdering our countrymen, but they have thrown aside all decency and morality, parading old men of the religious profession, and women, in the public places, made fast to a cannon, and their bodies exposed to shame.

"They have established an inquisitorial system for all these punishments; they have dragged out peaceful inhabitants from their houses, and transported them across the ocean, to be tried for pretended offences, and have executed, without trial, a multitude of citizens.

"They have attacked our sea coasts, and murdered defenceless inhabitants, without sparing clergymen and those in ex-

treme old age. By the order of general Puzuela, they burnt the town of Puna; and, meeting with no others, they put to the sword old men, women, and children. They have compelled our brothers and sons to take up arms against us, and have compelled them, under the command of Spanish officers, to fight against our troops. They have excited domestic insurrections, corrupting with money, and every species of seduction, the pacific inhabitants of the country, in order to involve us in a frightful anarchy, and to enable them to attack us weakened and divided. They have displayed a new invention of horror, by poisoning fountains and food at La Paz; and, in recompense for the kind treatment they received when obliged to surrender at discretion at that place, they blew up the barracks, with one hundred and fifty patriots, which had been previously mined for that purpose.

" They have abused the sacred privilege of flags of truce, tampered with our governors and generals, and they have repeatedly written letters inciting to treason. They have declared that the laws of war, recognised by civilized nations, ought not to be observed towards us; and, with contemptuous indifference, replied to general Belgrano, that treaties could not be entered into nor kept with insurgents.

" It is in the name of Ferdinand of Bourbon, that the heads of captured officers have been stuck up on the highways; that a distinguished partisan leader has been actually impaled; and that the monster Centano, after having murdered colonel Gamargo in the same horrid manner, cut off his head, and sent it as a present to general Puzuela, informing him that it was a miracle of the Virgin del Carmen.

" It is Ferdinand of Bourbon who has sent his generals with decrees of pardon which they caused to be published, with no other view than to deceive the simple and ignorant, in order to facilitate their entrance into cities and towns; but giving, at the same time, private instructions, authorizing and commanding them, after having thus obtained possession, to hang, burn, confiscate, assassinate, and inflict every possible suffering on those who had availed themselves of such supposititious pardons.

"What could America expect from a king, actuated, at the very moment of seating himself on the throne, by sentiments so inhuman?—of a king who has no other rewards but chains and gibbets, for the immense sacrifices of his Spanish subjects in releasing him from captivity,—of subjects, who, at the expense of their blood, and of every privation, have redeemed him from a prison, in order to adorn his temples with a crown? If these men, to whom he owed so much, received death, were doomed to perpetual imprisonment, or to base slavery, for no other cause than that of having framed a constitution, what might we not expect to be reserved for us? To hope for a benign treatment from him, and from his bloody ministers, would have been to seek among tigers for the mildness of the dove. Then, indeed, would have been repeated towards us the ensanguined scenes of Caracas, Carthagena, and Quito. We should then have spurned the ashes of the *eighty thousand* persons who have fallen victims to the fury of the enemy, and whose illustrious manes justly call for revenge; and we should have merited the execrations of every succeeding generation of our posterity, condemned to serve a master always disposed to tyrannize over them, while, by his nullity on the sea, he has become unable to protect them from foreign invasion."

The Madrid Gazette has published the following, among many of the blood-stained despatches from America:

"*Battle of Santa Helena, in Peru, April* 3, 1816.

"I can assure your excellency, that I never saw rage nor energy equal to that of our enemies. They throw themselves on our muskets, as if they had nothing to fear from them: our soldiers were mixed with them; they grasped our men by the body, and endeavoured to wrench the arms out of their hands. A shower of stones fell upon us: we were obliged to fight with the bayonet. The wretch Lamargo died by my hand: I did not cease striking him with my sabre, until his sword fell from his hand. I send it to you, together with his head. More than six hundred men were despatched with the bayonet, or shot by the soldiers. I intend that the celebrated Pedro Villarubia shall be beheaded in the public square. He is about to be conveyed to Pesit, accompanied by two sergeants, who

deserted from the regiment of Lima. They will be shot, together with all the other prisoners."

Where is the citizen of the United States, where is the lover of liberty, or where is the man possessing even a spark of humanity, whose bosom does not throb with indignation against a policy such as that of Spain, after perusing this eloquent and dignified manifesto, and the relation we have given of the horrors that have taken place in Mexico, New Grenada, Quito, and Venezuela? What ought to be the feelings excited in the breast of every citizen of the United States, at the very mention of the *inhuman treatment*, and the *cold-blooded murder, of their fellow-citizens*, whom accident or the chance of war placed in the hands of the Spaniards in Mexico, and who were cruelly put to death, not to afford an example which might deter other foreigners from aiding the patriots, (for the cruelties exercised towards them have not yet been told to the world by the perpetrators) but to satiate that thirst for revenge which has always formed a component part of the Spanish character? Although Mina's comrades acted in contravention to the existing laws of their own country, that circumstance cannot possibly palliate the inhumanity they experienced,—inhumanity the more outrageous, as the conduct of the victims had been marked by honour, justice, and clemency;—inhumanity which can only be equalled by the wild and savage inhabitants of unexplored countries;—a degree of inhumanity which adds its mite to the load of infamy with which the annals of Spanish history are already burthened. The recollection of the scenes which occurred at the abandonment of Sombrero, and in the dungeons of San Juan de Ulua, cannot be easily effaced; and we hope, nay, we feel confident, that there does not exist an American citizen, from the Sabine to the Passamaquoddy, whose breast burns not with indignation against a nation which, in the present day, can sanction deeds of so heart-rending a nature.

If the causes which arrayed the colonies of North America in opposition to the authority of Great Britain, have been proclaimed by the world to be just,—with how much greater reason may the colonists of Spanish America appeal to the

universe for approbation and support, during their present struggles for emancipation from Spanish thraldom! Yet, strange and incredible as it may appear, there are in free North America many who, far from sympathizing with their southern brethren, or even wishing success to a cause in which they themselves have contended successfully,—condemn the exertions of those who are imitating their example in striving to obtain the blessings of freedom, support Spain with all the weight of argument, and are almost brought to deprecate the independence of Spanish America. Every trifling opportunity which presents itself is seized with avidity by many, to misrepresent and falsify the efforts of the ill-fated Spanish Americans. Their victories are burlesqued, their reverses are magnified, and their sufferings are derided, by those who, enjoying the blessings of security and plenty, know not, except by hearsay, the toils, the dangers, and the hardships, endured by this oppressed people. Incapable of appreciating their exertions, they are callous to their appeals, and even withhold their applause from the perseverance and intrepidity which they have displayed against the tyranny of the Old World. Because the union, energy, and wisdom, which accomplished the independence of the United States, have not directed the operations of a people who are only now emerging from a state of the most complex slavery, and involuntary ignorance, under which colonies ever groaned, they are shamefully disregarded as unworthy of protection, and the voice of humanity is suffered to waste itself in vain. Such principles should be found only in the satellites of crowned heads. That misrepresentation and falsehood on this subject should be propagated by Spanish agents, and foreigners who come into our country imbued with monarchical and aristocratical principles, cannot excite surprise; but can we refrain from expressing our regret and indignation, when we behold some of our own citizens espousing the cause of Spain, with as much zeal as if their very existence depended upon the continuance of her wide-extended dominion in the western hemisphere?

In the course of this work, we have merely glanced at some of the grievances which America has endured for the space of

three hundred years. Ponderous volumes would be filled with a detail of them. They are, however, so far known as to supersede the necessity of our enlarging farther upon the subject. It must, nevertheless, be remarked, that we did not observe in the former Cortes of Spain any disposition to relax the iniquitous system so long maintained in Spanish America; but, on the contrary, that body, in unison with the Cadiz monopolists, exhibited more rancorous hostility to the Spanish Americans than had been displayed during any period since the Conquest. We have already noticed the infamous decree of the Cortes, of the 10th of April, 1813, wherein they declared, that it was "*derogatory to the majesty and dignity of the national congress, to confirm a capitulation made with malignant insurgents.*" On examining the decrees of the Cortes, of the regency, and of the different juntas who exercised the functions of the Spanish government during the late war in the Peninsula, we do not find a single instance of paternal and generous conduct towards the Americas. But a few years ago, the Consulado, or board of trade of Mexico, composed of *European members*, in its solemn deliberations, manifested to the Cortes, that *the Americans were a race of monkies, filled with vice and ignorance,—automata, unworthy of being represented, or representing.* This silly and singular communication, instead of being treated with scorn, and its authors severely reprehended, gave rise to serious debates, in which the Americans were most grossly vituperated, as may be seen by examining the proceedings of the Cortes for September, 1811.

The representation of America, as well in the former as in the present Cortes, is the greatest farce, or rather the most outrageous insult that was ever offered to a body of rational beings. Spain, with a population of *nine to ten millions*, elects *one hundred and fifty* representatives to that body; while America, with a population of *eighteen millions*, has *thirty* representatives; that is, one for every six hundred thousand souls. But the most extraordinary feature in the farce, is, that *an electoral junta assembled at Madrid, in May last, and there named the thirty representatives who are to represent Spanish America*

in the Cortes. To say that the decrees of *such* a Cortes are binding even on that portion of Spanish America at present under the royal authority, would be an assertion rather difficult to maintain: but to suppose that the people of *Chili*, of *Buenos Ayres*, of *Venezuela*, and of *New Grenada*, are represented by men nominated at Madrid, and bound by the acts of a Cortes thus constituted, is indeed an absurdity that has no parallel in the annals of legislation. In fact, the orders issued by the late Cortes to the royal commanders in America, were more barbarous and imperious than those issued by Ferdinand, after his return to the Spanish throne; and we have seen how faithfully those orders were executed by the Spanish officers.

Every revolving hour, since the present revolution commenced in Spanish America, has been marked with new injuries towards its inhabitants; and considering the extent and nature of those injuries, we are astonished that there exists a Creole from Cape Horn to the Floridas, who does not execrate the Spanish name.

If, during the revolutionary contest of the North American colonies, any attempt on the part of the mother country to refuse the rebels, as they were then called, the rights of civilized warfare caused general indignation,—if, in the case of a single citizen put to death contrary to the usages of war, the whole nation took a common interest in the murder, and adopted immediate measures of retaliation, what ought to be the feelings and conduct of the South Americans towards a government which has acted as Spain has done during the present contest? If an Indian ally was reprobated by many of the most enlightened members of a British parliament, during the struggles of North America for independence, what language should now be used towards a nation, that has ordered and sanctioned such horrors as those we have related? Let us recall to the recollection of our readers the speech made by the venerable earl of Chatham, at the time when lord Suffolk, then British secretary of state, contended in the British house of peers for the employment of Indians in the war against America. The secretary undertook to maintain, that "*besides its policy, the measure was also allowable on principle, for that*

it was perfectly justifiable to use all the means that God and Nature put into our hands."

Earl Chatham replied, in a burst of eloquence, not surpassed for strength, beauty, and effect, by any thing history has recorded.

"I am astonished," exclaimed the dignified statesman,—"SHOCKED, to hear such principles confessed; to hear them avowed in this house or even in this country. My lords, I did not intend to have encroached again on your attention, but I cannot repress my indignation,—I feel myself IMPELLED to speak. My lords, we are called upon as members of this house, as men, as Christians, to protest against such horrible barbarity. 'That God and Nature put into our hands!' What idea of God and Nature that noble lord may entertain, I know not; but I know that such detestable principles are equally abhorrent to religion and humanity. What! to attribute the sacred sanction of God and nature to the massacres of the Indian scalping knife! to the cannibal savage, torturing, murdering, devouring, drinking the blood of his mangled victims! Such notions shock every precept of morality, every feeling of humanity, every sentiment of honour. These abominable principles, and this more abominable avowal of them, demand the most decisive indignation. I call upon that reverend and this most learned bench to vindicate the religion of their God, to support the justice of their country. I call upon the bishops to interpose the unsullied sanctity of their lawn; upon the judges to interpose the purity of their ermine, to save us from this pollution. I call upon the honour of your lordships to reverence the dignity of your ancestors, and to maintain your own. I call upon the spirit and humanity of my country, to vindicate the national character. I invoke the genius of the constitution. From the tapestry that adorns these walls, the immortal ancestor of this noble lord frowns with indignation at the disgrace of his country. In vain did he defend the liberty and establish the religion of Britain against the tyranny of Rome, if these worse than popish cruelties and inquisitorial practices are endured among us. To send forth the merciless cannibal, thirsting for blood!

against whom? Your Protestant brethren!—to lay waste their country, to desolate their dwellings, and extirpate their race and name, by the aid and instrumentality of these horrid *hell-hounds of war!* Spain can no longer boast pre-eminence in barbarity. She armed herself with blood-hounds to extirpate the wretched natives of Mexico; but we, more ruthless, loose the *dogs of war* against our countrymen in America, endeared to us by every tie that should sanctify humanity. My lords, I solemnly call upon your lordships, and upon every order of men in the state, to stamp upon this infamous procedure the indelible stigma of public abhorrence. More particularly I call upon the holy prelates of our religion to do away this iniquity; let them perform a lustration, to purify their country from this deep and deadly sin. My lords, I am old and weak, and at present unable to say more; but my feelings and indignation were too strong to say less. I could not have slept this night in my bed, nor have reposed my head upon my pillow, without giving this vent to my eternal abhorrence of such enormous and preposterous principles."

What would the patriotic and high-minded earl of Chatham have said, had he lived in the present times, and heard of the barbarities of Spain towards *her* colonists?

When the Russians put to the sword thirty thousand Turks at the capture of Ismail, all Europe shuddered. When it was said that Bonaparte had put to death his sick in Egypt, all Europe was shocked. When Indian savages are taken as the allies of Great Britain in modern warfare, the British people, as well as the whole civilized world, condemn the barbarous alliance. When the city of Washington was entered by the British, when the public edifices which had been erected there for civil purposes, and the national library, were set fire to by the merciless foe, Europe frowned on the destroyers, and registered the transaction in her records as an act of Vandalism, disgraceful to the exalted nation whose officers directed it, and dishonourable to the age in which it was committed. What then should be the denunciation which the

conduct of Spain to her transatlantic brethren has merited?—a nation, which, hugging itself in the cloak of religion; branding every other, that differed from her in tenets, with the stigma of heresy; proclaiming herself through the world as the champion of Christianity, and boasting of her peculiar adherence to its doctrines, orders and sanctions a system of atrocities, unknown in the darkest ages of society, and rewards with honours and distinctions those who show themselves to be animated with the spirit of her sanguinary edicts? Will it be believed by posterity, that the rest of the world looked on this tragic scene without making one single effort to stanch the bleeding wounds of eighteen millions of people? By this sanguinary course of conduct, more than a million of human beings have perished in Spanish America, since the year 1810; and no small proportion of these victims have perished, not on the field of battle, but by death inflicted in all its most hideous forms, by the hand of cold-blooded cruelty. "Have not sufficient victims been already immolated on the altars of vengeance, have not sufficient families been ruined, have not sufficient cities and towns been plundered and destroyed?" "Is it not time to put an end to such a vast and fruitless effusion of human blood, and to stanch the horrors of so destructive and protracted a war?"

"Are not the enormities we have related sufficient to fill the heart of every friend of his own species with alarm, and chill every feeling of humanity?"

The horrors we have noticed are not such as are inseparable from a state of warfare; they have been engendered by a spirit of revenge, and executed with a barbarity unpractised even in the darkest ages of Paganism. The stipulations of society, in all Christian states, have meliorated the afflictions of war by certain usages generally held sacred; but on the American continent, Spain has given to the ravages of war every infernal atrocity which the malice of a demon could suggest.

Is there no generous or eloquent Spaniard to be found in the present Spanish Cortes, who will raise his voice in that body,

and, emulating the renown of Chatham, step forward to stigmatize the dreadful system which Spain has pursued, and is still pursuing towards America?

If no European Spaniard can be found capable of divesting himself of his natural (orgullo) pride, or of elevating his mind above the prejudices of his education, are there no natives of America, in the present Cortes, who, like *Mexia*, *Lardizabal*, *Arispe*, *Teran*, *Calatrava*, *Palacios*, *Couto*, and *Ribera*, members of the former Cortes, will stand forth in behalf of America, at the present crisis, and raise their voices against the inhuman practices of this frightful and extraordinary contest? If no such generous statesmen appear in the saloon of the present Cortes, or if Spain pursues the system that has hitherto prevailed in her councils, humanity may still have to deplore, for a few years longer, scenes of carnage and desolation; but the arm of dreadful retribution cannot be long stayed; it will fall with accumulated weight on the head of every European Spaniard now in America, or who may hereafter dare to set his foot on its soil.

Nations, like individuals, when excited by powerful passions, soon pass to extremes in their conduct. The affection of a slave to a master is in some few instances strong and steady, but in general it is weak and precarious. The ties between a colony and a mother country, bear a much closer analogy to those between the master and slave, than between the parent and offspring.

Is it not an abuse of reason as well as a violation of every natural law, to suppose that the *parent state* (as it is called,) situated at a distance of two thousand leagues, should dictate to, and control an empire vastly superior in extent of territory and population? Can any thing account for the submission of colonies, under such circumstances, but an absolute ignorance of their physical and moral strength. Will not every attempt made by the parent state to keep those colonies in subjection, after the latter have discovered their *rights* and their *strength*, tend to destroy the little affection that may still linger in the bosoms of the colonists towards their former madre patria? Will not such outrages as Spain has been in the habit of

exercising towards the Spanish Americans for upwards of three centuries, and more especially during the last ten years, not only destroy every principle of attachment, but give birth to an inextinguishable hatred? Is it possible that the wise Europeans of the Peninsula, have not yet discovered the inutility of all their menaces and savage edicts, and of all their murders, to effect the pacification of America? Are they so infatuated or blinded by pride and prejudice as not to see, that the *constitution*, which would have been received some years ago with joy and gratitude by the Americans, will now be rejected with disdain? or if received by any portion, that it will be for no other purpose than a temporary expedient to enable them with more ease and certainty to accomplish their ulterior views in favour of the independence of their country?

We entertain very little expectation that the present Cortes will adopt a more liberal system of policy towards America than the last. It remains, however, yet to be seen, whether the lessons of experience will dissipate the mists in which the former Cortes were involved, and whether some of the members of the present body have become regenerated by adversity. We shall gratefully acknowledge our mistake, should the Cortes generously come forward and prove themselves just and wise, by respecting the rights of mankind in America, and by magnanimously confessing that the inhabitants of America, as well by reason as the laws of nature, are entitled to the privileges and blessings of self-government.

Should any enlightened Spaniard peruse these remarks, we pray that he will bear in mind, that they have been penned by a citizen of the United States, not with a view to wound the feelings of a Spaniard, but to show the dreadful effects of ecclesiastical and civil despotism on the human character. We know not any natural causes to make the natives of the Peninsula of Spain more sanguinary than the rest of the human race. The greater portion of the Spanish Peninsula enjoys as fine a climate as any in Europe; its soil is capable of yielding every thing necessary for human subsistence; and Christianity has shed its rays in every corner of the kingdom; but, neverthe-

less, there is a vindictive spirit in the Spaniard, there is hauteur in his deportment, cruelty in his conduct in war, and a jealousy the most absurd and constant, against the people of all other nations. These are characteristics of the Spaniards, attested by the pages of history, and by almost every traveller who has visited Spain. The exceptions to this general character are more rare among the Spaniards than among any other people of the earth. It is possible their character may be changed by a new course of education. Bigots always have been, and ever will be cruel; but when we see civil despotism blended with religious intolerance, we may cease to wonder, that the Spaniard, in his individual as well as national character, is proud and vindictive.

These traits have, in a most striking manner, been exemplified in the conduct of Spain and of Spaniards towards America; and, with a view to illustrate the subject, we shall close our memoirs of the Mexican revolution with the following paraphrase of the sentiments of a celebrated modern writer.

"Humanity hath lifted up her voice, and is invoking every heart of generous sentiments to frown upon the execrable scenes that are acting in America, and which, under names the most specious and venerated, are covering her with crimes of the deepest die. The men who tread the soil of that unhappy country have lost their natures. The eye there sees none but ferocious enemies, bent on mutual slaughter. Every thing is devastated—every thing is consumed by the sword and the flames. The Spanish soldier, made savage by his ideal wrongs, has proclaimed extermination to be the only law of those vast regions. How long shall we unmoved contemplate these horrors, which strip the human character of its noblest attributes, and degrade man to the level of the ferocious beasts of the forest? Shall havoc still elevate her ensanguined brow in the New World, within the eyeshot of the Old? and after so much has been done to ameliorate the intercourse between Europe and Africa, shall nothing be done for America?

"A king of Syracuse imposed no other law on conquered Carthage than the abolition of human sacrifices. The Catholic religion had cast down the blood-stained altars of Mexico;

but Spain has rebuilt the fearful shrines, and now, armies of inhuman priests offer up prostrate America, at her command, as a victim to appease the irritated manes of her rejected crown! Will Europe never cease to be the curse of the inhabitants of those climes, and to force from them their gold by their blood, and shed their blood by armies paid with that gold?

"The senate of Rome once listened with submission to a savage, and rewarded the ingenuous frankness of his words by suspending the exactions of his country. Ah! how nobly was Rome then represented by her senate, and how much more glorious would Europe appear, should she, in the name of humanity, interpose her august judgment to stem the tide of wo which overwhelms America, and should she, placing herself between these fierce combatants, exact a truce of their rage! When, then, America and Spain should present themselves before this Areopagus, what emotions would not the former excite, and how speechless would the latter be, if America, discovering her wounds, and showing her opened and almost bloodless veins, should exclaim, 'Cruel Spain! did Heaven form me for thyself alone? In tranquillity and happiness I had passed the peaceful ages that preceded the fatal hour, when the hand of thy Columbus tore aside the veil which from creation's dawn had hid me from thine eyes. But I learned to know thee by my tearful eyes and shed blood. For, soon as thy soldiers had landed on my shores, they poured among my unoffending children an unknown and appalling fire—and thy fiery coursers smote them with their mailed hoofs. Thou destroyedst my thrones, and the altars erected by my gratitude to that great luminary whose rays fertilize my soil, ripen the juices of my peerless vegetables, and beautify, with splendid hues, my flowers and my fruits—the inhabitants of my groves and of my wide-spread plains. The bowels of my lofty mountains give thee riches; the freshness and medicinal virtues of my plants give thee health; and the only acknowledgment that I have yet received from thee has been death, and death alone!

"'From the time that thou deliveredst to the flames the last scion of my Incas, and transportedst to another hemi-

sphere the race which occupied my throne of Mexico, hast thou forborne one instant to heap outrage upon outrage, and to add ruins to ruins?

"'With extended arms I receive thee in my territory, and thou instantly declarest me a *slave;* and to arrogate to thyself the right of subjecting me, thou placest the widest and most unnatural distinctions between thy children and mine, and condemnest them to form the *last* link in the chain of being.

"'It was necessary that Rome should command thee to view in them human beings, and thy obedience to her orders was for once without reproach. But, thenceforth, thou entrustedst to chains and to the knife the duty of maintaining that distinction thou hadst placed between mine and thine. Surely, beings so inferior to the cherished sons of thy bosom merited extermination, and *they have disappeared.* Then at least thou wast not a parricide; but now, is it not thine own blood that thou art shedding? Have those who sprung from thy loins, my adopted sons, lost in thine eyes all traces of their origin? Dost thou not acknowledge them as brothers? In the first tempest of thy wrath, thy vengeance fell on strangers; but now thou hast risen up against Spaniards,—thou warrest against thine own family. No longer do strange and different forms of worship divide us. My voice now utters the sounds of that majestic language which you have diffused throughout the vast extent of my dominions. Oh Spain! how canst thou assume the tender name of mother? A mother studies the happiness of her offspring,—their felicity constitutes her delight. But hast thou ever attempted to sooth my sufferings, or enlighten my mind? Speak, and inform me, in which of thy acts or sentiments can I recognise thy fostering care?

"'From the commencement of thy reign over me, thou hast trembled for the preservation of thy power. The extent of my territory fills thee with alarm, when compared with thy straitened limits in one corner of Europe. My wealth makes thee blush for thy poverty;—my fertility, for the barrenness of thy soil. The population which my vast regions are destined by the God of nature to subsist, frightens by anticipation thy unpeopled cities and deserted plains: and, to quiet thy

jealous fears, thou repressest the principles of strength and felicity within me, and withdrawest from my soil its exuberant fruitfulness, that the tree may bear no more fruit than thy own hand can pluck. Like the Dutch, who, with hoe in hand, traverse the fruitful Moluccas, and extirpate the luxurious shoots, lest their superabundance should interfere with the value of the produce to which avarice has limited those isles, thou hast commanded nature, prodigal of her favours to me, to become steril: thou hast forbidden the olive to yield its oil to me,—the mulberry tree, to nourish the insect whose industry would yield me robes of comfort and splendour,—the vine, to beautify my hills, or allay my thirst with its juice. To extract for thee the gold from my mountains, is all that thou permittest me to do. Thou hast debarred me from communication with the rest of the world; and if I am known to it, it is yet undiscovered to me. The products of human industry, the embellishments of art, and the advantages of science, thou withholdest from my enjoyment. My noble rivers flow through solitary forests and unpeopled regions. My ports are capable of containing all the ships of the world; but thy iron laws condemn them to a solitude that is never broken, but by some meanly freighted ship, despatched by the avarice of thy ministers, or by the intrigues of thy courtiers.

"'To whom hast thou committed thy authority over me? To ungrateful strangers. By whom have they been succeeded? By men equally unknown and ungrateful, whose rapacity has long since ceased to excite my surprise, and whose forbearance I have never known. Behold what thy reign has cost me: and add to this, thy wars that interest me not, which blockade my ports, ravage my coasts, and convert the vast circumference of my territory into the barrier of a prison.

"'But the endurance of these wrongs has reached its height. For a long time, thou hast ceased to exist in relation to me. Events, over which I had not the slightest influence, have occasioned this separation, and established new relations between us. Other views have burst upon my enraptured sight, and have created for me a new existence. Shall I renounce that existence for thy sake, and become again a hewer of wood

and a drawer of water? Leave me, oh leave me, to pursue in peace that path which is fitting to my age, and which the march of mind has formed for me. Deceive not thyself, nor think that it is I who have burst asunder the bonds that united us. It was nature herself,—it was that world from which thou hast excluded me, to which I now belong, and from which I must never again be parted.

" 'Tell me, did thy king alone reign over me? No: every Spaniard, every factory, every workshop, in the Peninsula, considered me its subject and its slave. Trembling under the load of multiplied wrongs, my groans were punished with stripes and death; and when I spoke of civil rights, thy sword was unsheathed, and the fire of extermination was lighted. Blood and ashes smoke on every side; and the lion of Castile, emulating in ferocity the monarch of my own forests, is preparing to reign, like him, in deserts.

" 'When the Supreme Being created man, was it that he should be a vassal? Has his neck been only formed to bear the yoke? Is the exercise of his reasoning powers to be denied him? Is the act of reflecting and comparing criminal? Does he merit extermination, for daring to resist oppression? Dost thou not know that it is the oppressor who makes the rebel? Is it not a law of nature, for manhood to feel and assert the rights belonging to that stage of existence? Do not children separate from their parents after a certain age, and hast thou never seen them become parents in their turn? Is it a crime then for me to throw off my swaddling clothes, when they no longer correspond with my growth? When every thing within reminds me of my maturity, when every thing without is enlightened, is in motion, still advancing to perfection, must I be held in leading-strings, and live in that darkness in which thou wouldst retain me? Where are thy means to effect it? Whence are thy treasures, but from the bowels of my mountains? Whence are thy ships, but from my woods? Whence thy revenue, but from the harvests that thou art now destroying, and from the plains that thou art now laying waste? Whence are thy soldiers? Alas! thou draggest them to die their hands in the blood of brothers. Dost thou rely on their

support? Will it not fail thee, if once they rivet their glance upon the fascinating ore that I can pour into their hands, instead of the miserable pittance that thou givest them?—if once they taste the fruits which I can offer them, instead of a subsistence measured by avarice, and diminished by fraud?—or if once they behold the brides to whom I can unite them, instead of that gloomy celibacy to which thou wouldst doom their youth, and by which thou wouldst extinguish their race? May not those very soldiers, under circumstances so new and unexpected to them, become my friends, and thy enemies? Forget not that the barbarians who invaded Greece, refused to quit it, when they had once tasted its delicious fruits, and caught a glimpse of those beauties which had served as models to the chisel and to the pencil of the artists whose works have filled a world with admiration. But suppose that these soldiers, with whom thou threatenest me, should not prove faithless to thee: sent for my destruction, they will find their graves on my shores, and their tombs will be seen in my mountains. Dost thou for a moment believe that the sight of them will intimidate me? The days of Cortez and of Pizarro have past away for ever. My sons and thy sons descend from them. No longer do thy arms and thy horses create surprise; and if for an age thy sons were believed immortal, for an age has that illusion been dispelled. Receive from me the ofttimes salutary advice of an enemy. Abjure an empire thou canst no longer control; and confess that the period has arrived, when America, by the decrees of the God of heaven, must be separated from your unnatural sway. Know that the day is fast approaching, when all nations will learn that their true interests consist in cultivating amity and intercourse with each other, instead of struggling for the crown of domination. Anticipate my future prosperity, and behold in it the real source of thine own happiness and regeneration. Get rid of thy watchfulness and thy remorse. Come and settle on my soil, as brothers and as friends. Participate in those harvests which all-bountiful nature, in my favoured climes, yields to industry. Let us interchange with each other our respective productions: let us terminate the murderous struggle between

our own kindred. Imbrue thy hands no longer in the blood of my sons. Let the powers of youthful America no longer remain dormant, but let her dispute the prize of improvement with Spain. Cultivate thy fields, and reanimate the languishing industry of thy people. With the riches of my mines will I pay for the produce of thy industry. But look to obtain them no more by the sword. Remember, too, that riches are the wages of industry; nor will this decree of nature be changed for thee. If my entreaties, thus founded in justice, reason, and fraternal sentiments, should fail to soften thy heart,—if, deaf to the voice of my sufferings, nothing will content thee but the return of my neck to the yoke,—if thou fearest not that America may one day deny to Spain, what Spain now refuses to America,—if thou wilt draw thy vengeful steel, and strive to enforce thy will at the point of the sword, then be it so. My sons shall answer thee with theirs; and thou wilt find engraved upon their blades, 'My ULTIMATUM!'"

END OF THE MEMOIRS.

ROUTE

TO

THE PACIFIC OCEAN.

CHAPTER XIII.

Examination of the different routes to the Pacific Ocean—Doubts respecting a passage to the north-west—The communication between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, at the province of Chocó, examined—Observations upon the routes by the Isthmus of Darien or Panama; by the Isthmus of Costa Rica; and by that of Oaxaca—General observations on the importance of this passage to the civilized world in general, and to the United States in particular.

HAVING thus far occupied the attention of our readers with an account of the civil wars of Mexico, we turn with satisfaction from those tragic scenes, to an object of the highest importance to the whole civilized world, and which we deem particularly interesting to the citizens of the United States, as well as to the present and future generations of the whole continent of America.

To shorten the navigation between the eastern and western parts of our globe, either by discovering a passage in the high northern latitudes, or by cutting canals and opening routes through some parts of the American continent, so as to afford either a navigable or rapid communication between the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, is most certainly an object which all the nations of the earth ought to rejoice in seeing accomplished.

For the two last centuries, large sums have been expended in attempting the discovery of a north-west passage to the Pacific ocean; and even at the present day, expeditions for that purpose are annually fitted out, either by the European governments or by enterprising private companies. To say that no such passage exists, and that for several degrees around the pole there is an impenetrable and eternal congelation, would be controverting the opinions of many enlightened men: but we believe they will all agree with us, that if ever such a passage should be discovered, it will be in latitudes encumbered with floating ice the greater part of the year, perpetually exposed to tempestuous weather, in a region where vegetation is scarcely visible, and where no supplies could be obtained by the unfortunate mariner, in the event of detention or shipwreck. These dangers may be encountered, and in part surmounted, by human courage and enterprise; but the time that would be required to perform a voyage in that direction would always be uncertain. It would at least occupy as many months as the present circuitous route to the western shores of the Pacific ocean. It is therefore our opinion, that should such a north-west passage eventually be discovered, its utility to the commercial world would be very trifling. Waiving, then, any further consideration of this point, we will proceed to examine the different sections of the continent, where nature requires but little aid from art, in order to effect the great object of a communication between the Pacific and Atlantic oceans.

The Spanish and British governments have at various times received the most flattering statements respecting the feasibility of opening this communication, either entirely by water in some places, or by land and water in others.

Nine different routes have been proposed: but we shall confine our examination to such places where we think the project of cutting a canal may be successfully undertaken, and where a land and water communication appears to be perfectly within the compass of human exertion to accomplish.

More than two centuries ago, the Spanish government knew that in the province of *Chocó*, in New Grenada, the cutting of a canal of a few leagues would effect a navigable communica-

tion between the two oceans; and that, during the rainy season, when the vallies of Chocó were overflowed, *canoes passed with produce from one sea to the other.* But they prohibited, under pain of death to those concerned, all communication whatever by that route. A monk, (the curate of Novilla) ignorant of the interdiction, or pretending to be so, assembled all the Indians in his parish, and in a short time cut a canal between the rivers *Atrato* and *San Juan*,—called since the canal of the *Raspadura.* Large canoes, *(bongos)* loaded with cocoa, actually passed through it. This communication was speedily stopped, by order of the government; and the unlucky curate with great difficulty obtained a pardon.

In the year 1813, we conversed with some intelligent Spaniards and Creoles, at Carthagena, respecting the Raspadura canal; and they stated, that although it was at present choked up with sand and bushes, yet it might soon be cleared. They also stated that there were several places between the sources of the rivers Atrato and San Juan, where a canal might be cut by a shorter route than the one which had been opened by the curate of Novilla. The distance between the navigable waters of Atrato and San Juan is only *thirteen leagues;* and from the Pacific to the Atlantic ocean, following the course of the ravines, is only *eighty leagues.* No doubt, therefore, can exist, that a water communication between the two oceans might be accomplished, in the province of Chocó, by either opening the former canal of Raspadura, or by cutting a new one between the two rivers we have mentioned. This communication would not admit the passage of vessels of large burthen, owing to impediments in the two rivers, and to the shallowness of the water on the bars at their mouths; but as the ordinary purposes of commerce could be answered by the use of large flat-bottomed boats, this route merits great consideration; and it will doubtless at some future day be the channel of an important commerce.

Besides this route, there is, in the same province, another, and, as we were informed, a preferable one, by the river *Naipi*, which empties into the Atrato, of which indeed it is only a branch. From the port of *Cupica*, on the Pacific ocean, to

the head of the navigable waters of the Naipi, is only *twenty-four miles*, and the country between the two places is a dead level. A canal might therefore be cut without difficulty. The course of the Naipi is stated to be very circuitous, and makes the distance of the navigation a few leagues longer than by the route of the Raspadura; but the circumstance of the waters of the Naipi being so near the port of Cupica, gives to this route an important advantage. The want of correct topographical knowledge prevents us from forming an opinion upon the merits of these two routes: but there cannot exist a doubt that by either of them a communication between the two oceans may be established *for the navigation of boats;* and it is possible that at some future period, when population becomes dense, and a free trade shall be permitted between the inhabitants of the Atlantic and Pacific shores, the province of Chocó may afford a channel for the navigation of large vessels.

Secondly. The *Isthmus of Darien*, or, as it is usually called, of Panama, is the section of the American continent most celebrated among geographers, authors, and projectors, as the point at which the two oceans may be united, by means of a canal, with greater facility than at any other place. The Spanish government have at different times endeavoured to obtain accurate surveys of the Isthmus; and for that purpose, engineers of eminence and capacity have been employed. Some of the reports that were officially made on this subject contain the most extravagant statements,—such as, that by cutting a canal of about *twelve leagues*, following the course of the ravines at the foot of the mountains, a passage may be opened as wide as the *Gut of Gibraltar*, from the bay of Panama to the navigable waters of *Cruces* or *Chagre*. Other reporters have stated, that such water communication cannot be accomplished but by locks and tunnels, passing over an elevation of at least *four hundred feet*. In one point, however, all these statements accord,—viz. that by a good road from Panama to the place of embarkation on the river Cruces, property of any description or weight might be conveyed in carriages; and, as the distance is only about *twenty-three miles*, this place would

undoubtedly afford a more rapid and shorter route between the two oceans than any yet pointed out.

During the administration of William Pitt, various projects were presented to him, tending to show the feasibility of cutting a canal through the Isthmus, sufficiently wide and deep to admit vessels of the largest size; and it is well known that this statesman frequently among his friends spoke with rapture on the subject, and that it constituted one of the great considerations in his mind when forming his plans for the emancipation of Spanish America.

So late as the year 1810, the Edinburgh Reviewers appeared to have entertained the same opinion; for we find, in the number for January of that year, the following observations:—

"*In enumerating, however, the advantages of a commercial nature which would assuredly spring from the emancipation of South America, we have not yet noticed the greatest, perhaps, of all,—the mightiest event, probably, in favour of the peaceful intercourse of nations, which the physical circumstances of the globe present to the enterprise of man—I mean, the formation of a navigable passage across the Isthmus of Panama,—the junction of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. It is remarkable, that this magnificent undertaking, pregnant with consequences so important to mankind, and about which so little is known in this country, is so far from being a romantic and chimerical project, that it is not only practicable, but easy.*" The writer proceeds to point out the means by which this great work can be effected; and then launches forth into a detail of the advantages which would result to the commercial and civilized world, by thus bringing Asia nearer to Europe, &c.

It is with diffidence we venture to combat opinions emanating from such respectable sources; but all details, tending to disembarrass this important and interesting question, must be acceptable.

Our information on this subject has been obtained from respectable individuals at *Carthagena* and *Jamaica*, who visited the Isthmus from commercial views, or for the express purpose of a personal examination into the facilities or difficulties of cutting the so much talked of navigable canal. It is there-

fore presumable, that intelligence from such sources is correct. We have likewise carefully examined the observations of William Walton Esq., of London, on this subject, published in the fifth and sixth numbers of the Colonial Journal of March and June, 1817; and as Mr. Walton's remarks have likewise been founded on personal investigation, during a visit he made to Panama, we think his opinions worthy of great attention, more especially as all his works on South America are characterized by liberality, and bear the impress of his ardent attachment to the cause of rational liberty, and his consequent desire to promote and extend the commercial intercourse between the Old and New World.

The river Chagre empties itself into the Atlantic ocean, about the latitude of 9° 18′ north, and 80° 35′ west longitude; it is navigable for boats (or large bongos) about twenty leagues, to the town of *Cruces:* the bar, at the entrance of the river, will not admit of the passage of a vessel drawing more water than ten feet. The current in the river, at certain seasons, is extremely rapid; so that boats are sometimes fifteen or twenty days getting to Cruces; but this disadvantage could be remedied by *steam vessels.*

A chain of mountains, which Humboldt considers a prolongation of the Andes of New Grenada, runs through the Isthmus, following the curvature of the coast, and is flanked by other lofty hills, rising on both sides. The road from Cruces to Panama winds round the sides of those hills, or rather along their central base. Supposing a canal to be cut at the foot of those hills, pursuing the sinuosities of the ravines, it would nevertheless be necessary for the engineer to make use of arches in some places, and subterraneous passages in others, in order to obtain a level; and he would likewise have to carry the canal over an elevation of some hundred feet. But even admitting that human ingenuity and labour should surmount the physical obstacles, and that a canal should be completed from Cruces to Panama, we nevertheless encounter at the latter an impediment that we firmly believe to be insuperable.

The water along the coast, in the bay of Panama, is so shallow, that none but flat-bottomed boats, of one or two feet

draught of water, can approach the shore. The city of Panama is situated at the head of the gulf of that name, on a peninsula washed by the waters of the Pacific ocean. A marine gate faces the port, which by the Spaniards is called "*El Puerto de las Piraguas*," from its being the place of resort of the boats so called. On the other side, facing the Isthmus, is another gate, called "*La Puerta de la Tierra*," or land gate. To the south, the town is surrounded and defended by a range of small islands. The anchorage place for all vessels of large size, is at two small islands, called *Perico* and *Flaminco*, distant about seven miles from the city. The lading and unlading of vessels is therefore tedious and expensive; and in fact the bay of Panama is nothing more than an open roadstead.

The extreme shallowness of the water near the beach, not only in the bay, but along the whole coast, opposite to those places where the projectors of the canal have contemplated cutting a passage, seems, as we have before observed, to present a most serious obstacle to its execution. Supposing that by locks and tunnels, and excavations, the Isthmus should be perforated from Cruces to the shores of the bay of Panama, the canal must then be continued to a distance of *seven miles into the ocean*, to admit the navigation of large vessels. We conceive it *possible* to make such a channel into the ocean, but it appears to us to be an Herculean task. Besides, such a channel would be liable to the operation of the same causes that have thrown up the sand along the shore of the bay, and would consequently be perpetually filling up. But even admitting that all these impediments could be overcome, and that a passage should be opened sufficient to allow vessels drawing eighteen or twenty feet of water to proceed as far as Cruces, they would not then find a sufficiency of water to descend the Chagre and to pass the bar at its mouth: it would be necessary therefore to continue the canal by another route, through the entire Isthmus, before it could be used as a passage for the navigation of large vessels.

We shall rejoice if future surveys of the Isthmus prove that the obstacles we have suggested either do not exist, or that they may be surmounted. For we readily confess, that there

is not a point where it would be more desirable to carry this design into execution, than the Isthmus of Panama, not only on account of its central position, but from the short distance between the two oceans.

Some writers have suggested, that the cutting of a canal at this Isthmus would produce a serious physical revolution in the adjacent country, arising from a supposed difference in the height of the waters on the Pacific and Atlantic shores. Some have gone so far as to say, that the whole Isthmus would be inundated, and the present course of the Gulf Stream be entirely changed. But we consider that Humboldt and other sçavans of the age have completely refuted the theory of a difference in the elevation of the waters of the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. The only difficulty, in our estimation, is, to find out a *practicable* route for a canal capable of admitting large vessels to pass from one ocean to another; but although such a route cannot be discovered, and the obstacles we have suggested cannot be surmounted, yet the Isthmus of Panama must be viewed as a place which from its geographic position and other advantages appears destined to enjoy a considerable future trade, but never to become a great commercial emporium.

Thirdly. We now come to treat of a section of the American continent, where the magnificent scheme of cutting a navigable canal, between the two oceans, appears unincumbered with any natural obstacles.

The province of *Costa Rica*, or, as it is named by some geographers, *Nicaragua*, has occupied but the very cursory notice of either Spanish or other writers; they have all, however, stated, that a communication could be opened by the lake of Nicaragua, between the two seas, but no accurate description of the country has ever been published, and indeed so completely has the mind of the public been turned towards the Isthmus of Panama, as the favoured spot where the canal should be cut, that Costa Rica has been disregarded.

In looking over the excellent maps of Melish and doctor Robinson, recently published, we perceive that the river called *San Juan* discharges its waters into the *Atlantic ocean*, in the

province of Costa Rica, about the latitude of 10° 45′ north. This noble river has its source in the *lake of Nicaragua*. The bar at its mouth has been generally stated as not having more than *twelve feet* water on it. About sixteen years ago, an enterprising Englishman, who casually visited the river, examined the different passages over the bar, and discovered one, which, although narrow, would admit a vessel drawing *twenty-five feet*. It is said that some of the traders to that coast from Honduras, are likewise acquainted with the passage just mentioned, but it has never been laid down on any map; and if the Spanish government had been informed of it, they would, conformably to their usual policy, have studiously concealed it. After the bar of the *San Juan* is crossed, there is excellent and safe anchorage in four and six fathoms of water. It is stated that there are no obstructions to the navigation of the river, but what may be easily removed; and at present large brigs and schooners sail up the river into the lake. This important fact has been communicated to us by several traders. The waters of the lake, throughout its whole extent, are from three to eight fathoms in depth.

In the lake are some beautiful islands, which, with the country around its borders, form a romantic and most enchanting scenery. At its western extremity is a small river, which communicates with the lake of *Leon*, distant about eight leagues. From the latter, as well as from Nicaragua, there are some small rivers which flow into the Pacific ocean,—the distance from the lake of Leon to the ocean is only about *thirteen miles*, and from *Nicaragua* to the gulf of *Papagayo*, in the Pacific ocean, is only *twenty-one miles*. The ground between the two lakes and the sea is a dead level. The only inequalities seen are some isolated conical hills, of a volcanic origin. There are two places where a canal could be cut with the greatest facility: the one, from the coast of *Nicoya*, (or, as it is called in some of the maps, *Caldera,)* to the lake of Leon, a distance of *thirteen or fifteen miles;* the other, from the gulf of *Papagayo* to the *lake of Nicaragua*, a distance of about *twenty-one* or *twenty-five miles*. The coast of *Nicoya* and the gulf of Papagayo are free from rocks and shoals, particularly in the

gulf, whose shore is so bold that a frigate may anchor within a few yards of the beach. Some navigators have represented the coasts of Costa Rica, as well on the Pacific as on the Atlantic side, as being subject to severe tempests; and hence these storms have been called *Papagayos*: but we have conversed with several mariners who have experienced them, and have been assured that they are trifling when compared with the dreadful hurricanes experienced among the Antilles, in the months of August, September, and October. The Papagayos are merely strong north-east gales, which last about the same time, during the winter season, as the northern gales in the gulf of Mexico. More than half the year the seasons are perfectly tranquil, and more especially on the coast of the Pacific ocean. We have conversed with persons, residents of the city of Leon, who assured us, that for twenty years past they had not experienced any thing deserving the name of a hurricane.

The climate of Costa Rica has none of the deleterious qualities of the province of Chocó and the Isthmus of Panama. The sea breezes from the Pacific as well as Atlantic set in steadily every morning, and diffuse over the whole Isthmus of Costa Rica a perpetual freshness. We think it is not hazarding too much to say, that this part of the American continent is the most salubrious of all the tropical regions. The most finely formed and robust race of Indians of any part of the American continent, are here to be seen. The soil is peculiarly fertile, particularly in the vicinity of the river San Juan, and around the borders of the lakes Nicaragua and Leon.

From the preceding outline, it will be perceived that nature has already provided a water conveyance through this Isthmus, to within a few leagues of the Pacific ocean; but, supposing that the route we have mentioned, up the river San Juan and through the lake of Nicaragua, should, when accurately surveyed, discover obstructions (which we do not anticipate) to the navigation of large vessels, where would exist the difficulty, in such case, of cutting a canal through the entire Isthmus? The whole distance is only *one hundred and ninety*, or at most *two hundred miles* from the Atlantic ocean

to the gulf of Papagayo. There is scarcely ten miles of the distance but what passes over a plain; and by digging the canal near the banks of the river San Juan, and the margin of the lake of Nicaragua, an abundant supply of water could be procured for a canal of any depth or width. Surely the magnitude of such an undertaking would not be a material objection, in the present age of enterprise and improvement, especially when we look at what has been accomplished in Europe, and at the splendid canal now cutting in our own country, in the state of New York. It may be said, that the present poverty of the country, and its spare population, are powerful obstacles to the execution of the project. If Costa Rica were in possession of a liberal government, willing to lend its encouragement to the important object, capital in abundance would speedily be forthcoming, either from Great Britain or from the United States. Enterprising companies could soon be formed; and we hazard little in predicting that the *canal stock* of such an association would yield a profit far greater than that of any other company in the world. With regard to the difficulty of procuring labourers in the present state of the population of the country, it could soon be obviated. The Indians of *Guatimala* and *Yucatan* would flock to the Isthmus of Costa Rica in thousands, provided the banners of freedom were hoisted there, under any government capable of affording them protection, and rewarding them for their labour. The present condition of those unfortunate people is wretched beyond conception, particularly of those in the interior of Yucatan. We have seen them attending Mass, and accompanying religious processions, in hundreds and thousands, almost in a state of nudity. Adults had a covering over their loins, and sometimes a shirt and a pair of drawers; but children of both sexes, under ten and twelve years of age, were literally naked. The fruits of their labour are absorbed by the exactions of their civil, military, and ecclesiastical despots: they feel no stimulus to industry, when they are debarred from enjoying or inheriting its fruits: they pass a life of ignorance and apathy, and die in misery. Unfold to these unfortunate beings a new and rational mode of existence, offer them moderate

wages and comfortable clothing, give them personal protection, and allow them the advantages of a free external and internal commerce, and they would soon display a different character. Offer to the view of the Indians these blessings, and multitudes would repair to the proposed point, from all the adjacent countries. Under such circumstances, we do not entertain any doubt that *twenty*, *thirty*, or even *fifty thousand* Indians could be procured for the work in question, who would give their labour with gratitude for a moderate compensation. Every Indian among the natives of Costa Rica would rejoice at the prospect of being employed and paid for his labour,—and more especially in the execution of an undertaking that even to his untutored mind would present such obvious advantages to his country and to his posterity.

We feel great pleasure in stating, that many of these ideas are derived from an interesting and able memoir, written by the late Bryan Edwards, the celebrated historian of the West Indies. We perused it, several years since, at Jamaica; and, although we have not seen it among any of the published works of that distinguished writer, we believe the memoir was laid before the British government. Bryan Edwards was perfectly aware of the importance of Costa Rica to the British nation, and of the practicability of forming the communication between the two seas in the manner we have suggested; and he made use of the most cogent and eloquent reasoning, to induce his government to *seize the Isthmus of Costa Rica by conquest in war, or to obtain it by negotiation in peace.* We presume the British government have not lost sight of those representations, nor of other interesting communications on the same subject which have been made to them by several intelligent individuals who had resided in the bay of Honduras. The Isthmus of Costa Rica may hereafter become to the New, what the Isthmus of Suez was to the Old World, prior to the discovery of the route to Asia by the Cape of Good Hope.

Should a canal be cut through Costa Rica, of sufficient dimensions to admit the passage of the largest vessels, and ports of free commerce to all nations be established at the mouths of this canal on the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, there cannot

be a doubt that in less than a century this Isthmus would become the greatest commercial thoroughfare in the world. Let the reader cast his eye upon the map, and behold its important geographical position. Nearly central as respects the distance between Cape Horn and the north-west coast of America,—in the vicinity of the two great oceans, superseding the necessity of the circuitous and perilous navigation around Cape Horn,—it appears to be the favoured spot destined by nature to be the heart of the commerce of the world.

The most ardent imagination would fail in an attempt to portray all the important and beneficial consequences which would result from the execution of this work, whose magnitude and grandeur are worthy the profound attention of every commercial nation. It is indeed a subject so deeply and generally interesting, that the powerful nations of the Old and those of the New World should discard from its examination all selfish or ambitious considerations. Should the work be undertaken, let it be executed on a magnificent scale; and, when completed, let it become, like the ocean, a highway of nations, the enjoyment of which shall be guarantied by them all, and which shall be exempt from the caprice or regulations of any one kingdom or state. This idea may at first view appear as extravagant as it is novel; but we cannot perceive any thing in it that is not in unison with the liberal and enterprising spirit of the present age; and we feel perfectly assured that if it receive the encouragement and support of the nations of the Old World, those who will hereafter govern in the New will not hesitate in the relinquishment of a few leagues of territory on the American continent, for the general benefit of mankind; and more especially when America herself must derive permanent and incalculable advantages from being the great channel of communication between the Oriental and Western World.

Fourthly. Having thus attempted to elucidate the extraordinary and peculiar advantages which Costa Rica possesses for the establishment of a navigable intercourse between the two seas, we will now proceed to examine another position, which, although it is deficient in some of the natural advan-

tages of Costa Rica, still possesses others of so important a character as to render it almost doubtful with us at which of the two places the desired communication ought first to be opened. Were we to consult the present and future interests of *Mexico*, and of the republic of the *United States*, we should say that the Mexican Isthmus, or, as it is more properly designated, the *Isthmus of Tehuantepec*, is the section of all others on the American continent, where the communication between the Pacific and Atlantic oceans should be made: but as we are desirous of seeing the blessings of commerce extensively diffused for the benefit of the human race generally, and not of any nation in particular, we should rejoice to see the communication between the two seas simultaneously opened at every place where it is practicable, whether by land or water, or by the latter solely, thereby exciting emulation, and widening the range of commercial enterprise. We do not advocate a system of commercial aggrandizement which seeks to raise itself by the oppression and ruin of other nations, nor a system of restrictions at variance with the laws of nature and the happiness of mankind. We wish to see the two great oceans of our globe brought nearer to each other by canals and high roads, at such places as the God of nature has evidently destined for channels of communication; and that they should no longer remain dark and dreary deserts, such as they have been for ages, under the antisocial principles of the Spanish government.

The *Isthmus of Tehuantepec* is comprised in a tract of territory embracing the intendancy of Oaxaca and part of that of Vera Cruz. On the coast of the Pacific ocean, it extends from a place called *Tonala*, on the borders of Guatimala, to the province of La Puebla. On the Atlantic coast, or rather in the great bend of the Mexican Gulf, it extends from the bay of Alvarado to Yucatan, including the province of Tabasco. The greatest breadth of the Isthmus, within those limits, is about one hundred and twenty-five miles. The narrowest part is between the port of Guasacualco in the Gulf, and the bay of Tehuantepec on the Pacific ocean. The latitude of the former is about 18° 30′, and of the latter about 16° 30′. From the

summit of a mountain called Chillilo, or La Gineta, on a clear day, the Atlantic and Pacific oceans can be distinctly seen. We have conversed with many persons in the city of Oaxaca, who had visited the mountain for the sole purpose of enjoying this interesting spectacle; and they speak in the most rapturous strains of the sublimity of the surrounding scenery, as well as of the beauty and grandeur which the view of the two oceans presents. A chain of mountains, which may be termed a continuation of the Andes, runs through the centre of this Isthmus, the elevation of which above the ocean varies from five or six thousand to three or four hundred feet. From some extraordinary convulsion of nature, vast chasms or ravines have been formed among those mountains, which we shall hereafter speak of, as it is by means of those fissures that nature appears to point out to man the practicability of forming a water communication between the two seas. During the rainy season, these chasms contain a vast body of water, which seeks its discharge by rivers flowing into the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. The Indians of the Isthmus, particularly those of Tabasco and Tehuantepec, assert that they pass with their canoes entirely through the Isthmus. We endeavoured, while at Oaxaca, to ascertain that fact; and we are convinced that when the waters are at their height during the rainy season, a canoe may pass, by the sinuosities of the ravines, from the river *Guasacualco* to the rivers *Chimalapa* and *Tehuantepec*. There is no part of the Mexican kingdom watered by such noble rivers as this Isthmus. We shall merely notice a few of the most considerable. *Guaspala*, *Tustepec*, *Cañas*, and several others with whose names we are unacquainted, discharge their waters in the bay of Alvarado, a few leagues to the south-east of the city of Vera Cruz. The *St. Pierre* and *Tabasco* disembogue near each other on the coast of Tabasco. Those rivers have their sources in the mountains of Oaxaca, Vera Cruz, and Chiapa. They flow through a country as fertile as any in New Spain, abounding in forests of the most valuable timber; and are navigable at all seasons for large boats, (bongos,) and during the floods have water sufficient for the largest vessels. On these rivers, at some future time,

steam navigation may be made to afford similar benefits to those it now yields on the Mississippi and Ohio. On the western side of the mountains, there are several important streams descending into the Pacific ocean. *Chimalapa* and *Tehuantepec* discharge into the bay bearing the name of the latter. The majestic river *Guasacualco* empties into the bay of the same name, in the Mexican Gulf. The sources of the three last named rivers are within five leagues of each other; but, as we have before mentioned, when the ravines of the mountains are filled with water, canoes may pass from the rivers Chimalapa and Tehuantepec to Guasacualco. We will not positively assert that a navigable canal may be formed, so as to unite the waters of these three rivers. We however believe it practicable. The point will be decided, when the Isthmus shall hereafter be properly surveyed. In the mean-time, we will examine the importance of the Isthmus, as a means of communication between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, even should a canal never be formed.

At the mouth of the river Guasacualco, is the most spacious and secure harbour of any on the Atlantic coast of Mexico. It is the only port in the Mexican Gulf, where vessels of war, and others of a large size, can enter; and is far superior either to Pensacola or Espiritu Santo. There are, at all seasons, on the bar at the mouth of the port, *twenty-two feet* water; and it is said, that during the flood of the river, the bar occasionally shifts, and affords passages in *five and six fathoms* water. Some years ago, a Spanish ship of the line, called the Asia, crossed the bar of Guasacualco, and anchored in the port. We have heard of some ports to the northward of Vera Cruz, capable of admitting vessels of a large size; of these, *Matagorda* has been stated to have *twenty feet* water on the bar at the mouth of the harbour: it is in latitude 28° 30′, about half-way between the rivers Sabine and Del Norte. But from recent information which we have obtained from the officers of the United States' navy, who have been cruising in that vicinity, we are induced to believe that there is not a single safe port in the whole range of the coast in the Gulf, with the exception of *Guasacualco*. Vera Cruz is little more than

an open roadstead; and during the northern gales, vessels are frequently driven ashore in that port. Ships of war, and other large vessels, are moored by cables made fast to rings in the walls of the castle of San Juan de Ulua, situated on a small island in the centre of the harbour; but during heavy gales, they are even here exposed to the danger of foundering.

The river *Guasacualco* is navigable for vessels of the largest size, to within *twelve leagues* of the navigable waters of *Chimalapa* and *Tehuantepec*. The latter river admits from the Pacific ocean vessels drawing twenty feet water. It was on this river the celebrated Cortez constructed ships, when he sent Pedro de Alvarado to conquer Guatimala. No doubt therefore exists, that the Isthmus of Tehuantepec can be entered on the Pacific and Atlantic coasts, by the rivers before mentioned, and that a *good carriage road* might be made, of from *twelve* to *fourteen leagues*, along the sides of the mountains, by which all species of merchandise could be transported with ease, in *a few hours*, from the navigable waters of Chimalapa and Tehuantepec, to those of Guasacualco.

There is no part of New Spain where such a road could be made with so much facility; and indeed, if on a topographical survey of the Isthmus, it shall be found practicable to cut a canal, there is no place where such an undertaking could be accomplished with such ease as in the province of Oaxaca.

It is proper that we should here present the reader with a brief description of this intendancy, in order to give him some idea of its present and probable future importance.

The intendancy of Oaxaca is bounded on the north and north-east by that of Vera Cruz, by the captaincy general of Guatimala on the south-east, by the intendancy of La Puebla on the west and north-west, and by the Pacific ocean on the south. In its boundaries are comprehended a great part of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, as before described. It is about one hundred and twenty-five leagues in length, from east to west, and its greatest breadth about ninety leagues. Notwithstanding the contracted limits of this province, and although not one-eighth of it is yet cultivated, it has a population, in proportion to its surface, far greater than any other province in New Spain. According to a

census taken in 1808, it contained *six hundred thousand* inhabitants. The number of cities, towns, and villages, exceeds *eight hundred.* We have visited several villages, containing six and seven thousand inhabitants. The city of Oaxaca (or Antequera) contains about thirty-eight thousand inhabitants; and, as we have observed in a former chapter, this city equals, if it does not surpass, the capital of the Mexican kingdom, in its beautiful streets and squares, as well as in the splendour of its edifices. Its salubrity is unequalled on the American continent; even its shores on the Pacific ocean appear exempted from the usual diseases which afflict the inhabitants of the Atlantic and South Sea coasts.

The population of *Tehuantepec*, which is situated on the river, only *six leagues* from the ocean, and about the latitude of 16° 30′, are among the most active and healthy race of Indians we have ever seen. The Indian females of Tehuantepec may be properly called the Circassians of Southern America. Their piercing eyes give to their countenance an extraordinary animation; their long black hair is neatly plaited, and adorned with combs made of gold or tortoise shell; while the celerity and grace of their movements strike a stranger with astonishment. They are very industrious, and manufacture nearly all their own clothing. They are remarkable for their cleanliness, and are fond of bathing. The Spanish government, during the present revolution, have looked upon these Indians with a jealous eye, in consequence of their known predilection to the insurgents. The propinquity of the town to the sea coast, and its being situated on a navigable river, are circumstances that give the government much uneasiness, because they are aware, that if a foreign enemy should land on the coast of Oaxaca, they would be received with open arms by the Indians of Tehuantepec, and indeed by the greater part of the population of the whole province, as we have suggested in a former part of this volume. The intendancy of Oaxaca, therefore, not only at present possesses an immense population, but is of the highest importance for its valuable productions. It is the region of New Spain that appears the most favourable for the production of the important article of cochineal. In no other part of

Mexico does the Nopal (on which tree the cochineal insect subsists) flourish so well. Its propagation has been unsuccessfully attempted in various other provinces; but not only do the climate and soil appear peculiarly adapted to this plant in Oaxaca, but the Indians have, by a long course of habit, acquired so much experience in the manner of cultivating the Nopal, and collecting the insects, as to preclude all rivalship in any of the other provinces. In some years there have been produced in Oaxaca, four hundred thousand pounds weight of cochineal:—this is worth, in Europe, even during peace, about one million six hundred thousand dollars. During war, it has frequently sold in England at twenty-five shillings sterling a pound. The poor Indian who collects this precious commodity, barters it for dry goods to the Spanish storekeepers in the villages. The extortion of these men, together with the exactions of the government and priesthood, leave to the Indian a miserable return for his care and industry; but we have no doubt that if these unjust and unnatural restrictions on the labour of the natives were removed, the intendancy of Oaxaca would in a very few years produce above a million of pounds of cochineal per annum.

The mountains of this intendancy, particularly those of the Misteca, are likewise peculiarly adapted to the growth of the mulberry tree. Many years ago, the experiment was made, and it succeeded so well that it awakened the jealousy of the European Spaniards, and they created so many obstacles to the manufacturing of silk in Oaxaca, that the Indians became exasperated, and *in one night* destroyed every mulberry tree in the intendancy; since which time, no attempts have been made to renew its culture.

The indigo, in the district of Tehuantepec, is superior in quality to that of Guatimala; but as there are no ports open to foreign commerce along the coast of the Pacific ocean, in the vicinity of Tehuantepec, nor indeed on any part of the coast of Oaxaca, the inhabitants have not been stimulated either to the culture of that, of the cotton plant, or of the sugar cane, except so far as is absolutely necessary to supply their own immediate consumption.

In all the mountainous districts of Oaxaca, and more especially in the spacious vallies which are situated from twenty-five hundred to six thousand feet above the level of the sea, we find a soil and climate at least equal, if not superior to any on the globe. There is not a single article raised in the temperate zone that would not here find a congenial region. Wheat, and all kinds of grain, yield a return to the cultivator equal to that of the most fertile parts of Europe. The fruits and vegetables of Oaxaca are unrivalled for luxuriance and delicacy. Peaches, pears, apricots, and strawberries, are here to be found of a size and flavour superior to those of the south of France; and the variety and excellence of the grape point out the vallies of Oaxaca as the great future vineyards of New Spain. Asparagus, artichokes, turnips, cabbages, and all the various productions of horticulture, grow to a size and perfection we have never beheld elsewhere.

To all these important natural advantages of this favoured country, must be added that of its mineral productions. Some of the most valuable gold mines of New Spain are in this province; but they have not yet been extensively worked, inasmuch as the attention of the directors of the mining establishments in Mexico has been principally directed to the mines of Guanaxuato and of other provinces, silver mines being considered more profitable than those of gold. The Indians of the upper and lower Misteca, as well as those of the district of Tehuantepec, collect grains of gold in the beds of the rivulets that flow through the mountains, and larger masses of gold have been found in Oaxaca than in any other part of New Spain. Indications of silver ore are likewise discoverable in all the mountainous districts, but as yet scarcely any attention has been paid to them. In fact, there cannot be a doubt that this province abounds in all the precious minerals; and when the use of machinery shall be introduced, and the restrictions on human industry and enterprise be removed, this province will yield as much gold and silver as any other in America. It is worthy of remark, likewise, that copper and iron ore have been found in different parts of Oaxaca. In the village of *Yanhuitlan*, there is a large piece of metal, which

the blacksmiths of the place use as an anvil. It was found on the summit of a hill near the village. It is of an extraordinary weight for its dimensions. Various attempts have been made to fuse it, but it has resisted the most intense heat.*

From the preceding outline of the great resources of this province, including its dense population, it will be evident to the reader, that to make a carriage road of fourteen, or even (should it be necessary) of twenty leagues, over the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, so as to form a rapid communication from the navigable waters of the Chimalapa and Tehuantepec to the Guasacualco, or to cut a canal through such parts of the Isthmus as an accurate survey shall show to be fittest for the purpose, are operations which could be performed with the greatest facility by the inhabitants of Oaxaca.

The idea of such an undertaking has long been familiar to several enlightened men of Oaxaca. So early as the year 1745, a memorial was presented to the viceroy of Mexico, signed by several distinguished Creoles, praying him to represent to the court of Spain the immense benefits that would arise to the kingdom, from making Guasacualco a port of entry, and the great depot of commerce, instead of the port and city of Vera Cruz. A copy of this interesting document was put into our hands, while in the city of Oaxaca, in the year 1816, and we were forcibly struck with the importance of the facts noticed therein. It displays an intelligence, a foresight, and a spirit of liberality, such as could scarcely have been expected, in those days, from men reared amidst that political and commercial darkness in which Spain enveloped her dominions. After giving a topographical description of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, and expatiating on the fertility and beauty of the coun-

* We feel great hesitation in adding, that this mass of metal is *platina*, although it is so named in some manuscript notes upon the intendancy of Oaxaca, at present in our possession, by Teran and Bustamante, names with which our readers are familiar. Beside their being men of general information, it may not be improper to add, that Bustamante was at one time connected with the School of Mines in Mexico. We at least learn, from their so terming it, that it is a very general belief that the mass is platina. The mineralogist will, of course, immediately pronounce it to be impossible,—and we are content.

try, the memorialists explicitly declare that a canal can be cut, so as to unite the waters of the rivers before mentioned; and they likewise state, that should political reasons prevent the formation of the proposed canal, at all events a great road might be made across the ridge, by means of which property could be transported in carriages at a moderate expense. The memorialists then proceed to unfold the great advantages that would result to the kingdom of Mexico, by opening a traffic between Manilla and the coast of Oaxaca, instead of the trade being restricted (as it still is) to the port of Acapulco. The superior advantages of the port and harbour of Guasacualco over that of Vera Cruz, and the number of valuable ports on the coast of Oaxaca, are then noticed; and of the latter they particularly mention *Tehuantepec*, *San Diego*, *Santa Cruz de Guatulco*, *Cacalutla*, *San Augustin*, *Puerto de los Angeles*, *Escondido*, (hidden port,) and the ensanada or bay of *Mazuntla*. The port of Escondido has a narrow but excellent entrance, which is only discovered upon a very near approach to the coast; but it is as spacious as Acapulco, and would afford perfectly secure moorings for hundreds of vessels. It could easily be fortified so as to render it impregnable to external attacks. The port of Santa Cruz de Guatulco is likewise equal to any on the Pacific shore, and is situated only thirty-five leagues south of the city of Oaxaca.

The whole of the memoir alluded to is full of interesting information and luminous arguments, and would have excited the profound attention of any other government than that of Spain. The merchants of Vera Cruz no sooner heard of the memorial, than they adopted every possible measure to prevent its even reaching Madrid; but nevertheless it was transmitted to the court. The Cadiz monopolists, and the Philippine company, viewed with great alarm a project that threatened to divert the trade out of its ordinary channels. The mercantile establishments they had already fixed at Acapulco and Vera Cruz, and the expensive edifices they had erected at those places, would become valueless in proportion as this should be effected. These parties, therefore, and their agents in Vera Cruz and Acapulco, put in action every engine of in-

trigue, in order to defeat the wishes of the Oaxaca memorialists. The memorial was placed among the secret royal archives at Madrid, that is, it was laid on the shelf of oblivion; and the only notice that was ever bestowed on it was by an order from the court, *prohibiting the parties from ever again reviving the subject, under pain of the royal displeasure;* and severely reprimanding, or stigmatizing, the Oaxaca memorialists, as *audacious innovators of the established regulations and commerce of the kingdom.*

The only viceroys who have displayed liberal sentiments, or shown the least regard for the internal improvement of New Spain, and the establishment on liberal principles of the internal and external commerce of the country, were the count of *Revillagigedo* and *Don José Iturrigaray.* Both of those viceroys were men of enlarged minds, who viewed with disgust the unnatural and impolitic regulations imposed by Spain upon her colonies. During their administration, they made some important improvements in Mexico. The formation of a canal to unite the waters of Guasacualco with those of Chimalapa and Tehuantepec, was a favourite project with both; and convinced of its practicability, they made urgent representations to the court of Madrid, to induce it to sanction the undertaking. Their applications were of no avail, and in the end, they both incurred the displeasure of the cabinet of Madrid. The character and fate of the noble-minded Iturrigaray have been noticed in our first chapter of the Memoirs of the Revolution.

Having shown the practicability and facility of opening a communication, either by a navigable canal or by a land and water conveyance, at the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, we will now proceed to draw an outline of the great advantages to the commercial world in general, and particularly to the inhabitants of *Mexico*, *Guatimala*, and the *United States*, that will flow from such a communication. It is necessary to remark, that the following observations are founded upon our conviction that New Spain will become independent on European control. At what period this great event will be accomplished, we will not venture

to predict; but we may express a belief that it will take place in a very few years.

In viewing the map of the American continent, we perceive that the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and the Isthmus of Costa Rica are the two great points at which to concentrate the commerce of the New World, and to facilitate the intercourse between it and the Old World. It is immaterial at which of those two points the communication be first opened; it matters not which of them will become the more important. If both communications be simultaneously opened, we conceive there will be no want of commerce to render the districts through which they will pass flourishing in the highest degree.

The Isthmus of Costa Rica will be the proper and natural route for part of the commerce of Guatimala, Peru, and Chili. The Isthmus of Tehuantepec will be the route for the commerce of the vast range of coast on the Pacific ocean, stretching from Guatimala to the north-west extremities of the American continent. The advantages which this last named Isthmus enjoys, by being in the heart of a thickly settled, rich, and healthy country, have been already described; and its proximity to the United States renders it, in our estimation, the most important spot at which to perfect the first communication between the two oceans.

Tehuantepec on the Pacific ocean, and Guasacualco on the Atlantic, ought to be declared *free ports* for the commerce of all nations. Property passing by this route should pay only a toll or trifling duty, for the purpose of keeping the canal or the road in a constant state of good order. We have stated that large vessels can enter the rivers Tehuantepec and Guasacualco, and ascend the same to within about fourteen leagues of each other. We have shown that a good carriage road could be promptly made, so as to transport property of every kind to and from the respective rivers. Making, therefore, large allowances for unexpected obstacles, we think that by this route cargoes of all kinds of merchandise could be transported from one ocean to the other, *in less than six days*. The productions of Guatimala, of Oaxaca, of La Puebla, of Mexico, of Valladolid, and of Guadalaxara, instead of being

conveyed, as they are at present, an immense distance by land to Vera Cruz, would be carried to the ports of those provinces on the Pacific coast, and embarked for Tehuantepec, thence pass over to Guasacualco, and from the latter be embarked for Europe, the United States, or elsewhere. The future products of the great province of Sinaloa, of Old and New California, and of all the north-west regions of America, could be brought to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. The fabrics of Europe and of the United States could be carried to Guasacualco, passed over to Tehuantepec, and thence be circulated through the vast regions we have just mentioned. The products of China and of the East Indies would likewise be brought to this Isthmus, dispersed over Guatimala, Oaxaca, and all the eastern sections of the Mexican empire adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico, and be carried with rapidity to the river Mississippi, to Florida, and indeed to all parts of the United States, and to Europe.

The intercourse between the United States and its territory on the north-west coast of America, would be carried on with safety and rapidity by the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, instead of by the present tedious and perilous route around Cape Horn: and *steam navigation* might be introduced in the Pacific ocean, so as to effect an entire revolution in the present commerce of the whole Southern Sea. It is not only along the vast coast of the Pacific ocean, from Valparaiso to Columbia river, that steam vessels could be used, so as to triumph over the obstacles which have hitherto impeded the navigation of those seas, but we perceive no difficulty to the traversing of the whole Southern ocean in steam vessels. The voyage from Manilla to Acapulco has frequently been made, by dull-sailing Spanish ships, in *seventy-five days*. At certain seasons of the year, it has been performed by vessels whose top-gallant sails were not once taken in during the voyage. Violent storms are seldom experienced in the Pacific ocean, excepting in the vicinity of Cape Horn and in the high latitudes to the north-west. Such a vessel as the steam-ship Fulton could perform a voyage between Oaxaca and China, with infinitely less sea risk than attends the voyages she is now performing

between New York, Havana, and New Orleans. A steam vessel could perform the voyage from Tehuantepec to China, in *from fifty to sixty days;* and indeed, were we to calculate on the favourable winds at certain seasons of the year, united to the power of steam, it can be proved that it is practicable to perform the voyage between Oaxaca and Canton in *less than fifty days*. We forbear dilating on the importance of this invaluable art to the commerce of the Southern ocean, lest some of our readers should deem our sketch an enthusiastic flight of fancy: but to those who are conversant with steam navigation, who are acquainted with the wonders it has already performed in the internal navigation of our country, who have examined the structure of the steam-ship Fulton, and who have marked the improvements that are yearly adding strength to the power of steam, our expectations will not appear too sanguine.

From the river Mississippi, a steam vessel could with ease perform a voyage to the port of Guasacualco in *six* days. Allowing *seven* days for the transportation of property across the Isthmus, and *fifty* for the voyage to China, it will be seen that by steam navigation a voyage could be performed from the United States to China in *sixty-three* days. This will be more clearly evinced, by the actual computation of the distances:—

	Statute miles.
The *ordinary route* from Philadelphia to Canton, - -	16,150
By *steam boat navigation* and conveyance through the Isthmus of Oaxaca, from and to the same places:—	
From Philadelphia to Guasacualco, - -	2,100
Passage over to Tehuantepec, by land and water,	120
From Tehuantepec, by the islands lying nearly in the direct course, to Canton,—	
To the Sandwich islands, - - - 3,835	
Ladrone do. - - - - - 3,900	
Canton, - - - - - - - - - 2,080	
——9,815	
——12,035	
Actual distance saved, - - - - - -	4,115

	Statute miles.
From Philadelphia to Columbia river, by the *usual route* of Cape Horn, - - - - - - - - - -	18,261
From the same to the same, by the *proposed route*:—	
To Guasacualco, and overland, - - - - - 2,220	
From Tehuantepec to the Columbia, - - - 2,760	
——	4,980
Actual distance saved, - - - - - -	13,281

[*The preceding calculations were furnished by Mr. Melish.*]

We calculate, likewise, that steam vessels could perform the voyage from Columbia river to Tehuantepec, in *from eighteen to twenty-four* days, more especially by taking advantage of the proper seasons. Along the whole range of the Mexican and Californian coasts, there are safe and convenient harbours, which would afford refreshments, and shelter from storms. It is true that this immense extent of territory is at present thinly settled, and that the wretched inhabitants, by the barbarous policy of the Spanish government, have been excluded from all intercourse with the civilized world. The whole of the country adjacent to the Pacific ocean, with its noble rivers and fertile soil, is nearly in the same state as at the period of its discovery by the Spaniards. The only ports on the Mexican coast that have been permitted to enjoy any trade, are San Blas and Acapulco; but even this trade was so complete a monopoly, and encumbered by so many restrictions, that it scarcely deserved the name of commerce, and was of comparatively little utility to the inhabitants in general. The western sections of Mexico have been supplied almost exclusively with articles carried by land from Vera Cruz. The impost charges at that place, the enormous expense of land carriage over such a vast extent of territory, and the numberless exactions on the route, increased the price of foreign merchandise to four or five times its original cost; whereas, had the articles been landed at Guasacualco, conveyed across the Isthmus, and thence transported by water to the fine bays and rivers along the coast, the expense would have been trifling, and the route performed in one-third of the time that was occupied in transporting them by land.

When those restrictions shall be removed under which the Mexican people have so long suffered, that is, when their country shall no longer be subject to the control of Spain,—when human industry shall be allowed the scope which reason and nature dictate,—and when the inhabitants of Mexico shall be permitted to enjoy an unshackled traffic with all nations, how extraordinary will be the change in their condition! Not only will the beautiful intendancies of Guadalaxara, Valladolid, La Puebla, Mexico, Oaxaca, and Vera Cruz, become the regions of comfort and opulence, but all the internal provinces, and even Old and New California, will soon become flourishing and populous countries. Let the reader cast his eye upon the map, and behold the position of the great provinces of *Sonora*, *Sinaloa*, and *Biscay*, adjacent to the Gulf of California; let him trace the route of the river *Colorado*, from its source to its discharge in the Californian Gulf; and view the noble rivers of *Tinpanogos*, *Buenaventura*, and *Felipe*, discharging their waters on the coast of New California; let him then anticipate the future importance of this country, when a government made by and for the people shall there be established. The country through which those rivers flow, and the coasts of both the Californias, have remained a desert, not because the soil and climate are, as some writers have represented, unfavourable to the residence of man, but because the Spanish government had studiously barred the door to their settlement and improvement.

We have perused some interesting manuscripts respecting the Californias, and the provinces of Sinaloa and Sonora; one in particular, written by *Padre Garcia*, who travelled from the mouth of the Colorado to its source, a distance of more than six hundred miles. We have read others, written by the friars who resided at the different missionary establishments on the coast of California. They represent a very small part of the peninsula of Old California as being a rocky and steril country: but all New California, nearly up to the Columbia river, and all the interior of the province of Sonora, they extol for its fertility of soil and purity of climate.

It may not be amiss here to remark, that about eight years since, we met with a Russian gentleman, who had visited Monterey, on the coast of California, and who was in possession of a great stock of valuable information respecting those countries. He spoke in the most favourable terms of the climate, and represented the soil to be excellent. We have little doubt but that the journal of this Russian was laid before his government; and it may have given rise to those projects of the Russian cabinet which have been recently spoken of. It has been rumoured, that a secret treaty was actually entered into between Ferdinand VII. and the emperor of Russia, by which the former transferred to the latter a considerable part of New California; but, owing to the remonstrances of the government of Great Britain, upon receiving information of such treaty, the court of Madrid have never openly avowed it, nor carried it into effect. Whatever credence may be given to this report, we know that the Russians, in pursuance of their system of advancing their power wherever a foothold can be gained, have planted their banners on several parts of the American continent. Their settlements commence at the island of Kodia, in 57½° north latitude, and 152½° west longitude. They occupy an important position in Norfolk Sound, in 57° north latitude, and 135° west longitude, where they have a strong fort, mounting upwards of one hundred pieces of heavy cannon; and in the year 1813, they had descended as far south as 38½° north latitude, and settled at Badoga, distant about thirty miles from the northernmost Spanish settlement in California. Let the Russian imperial flag be planted on the American continent by force or by negotiation, it will be better for mankind than that the country should remain a desert under the dominion of Spain. Whether Russians, citizens of the United States, or Mexicans, shall predominate among the settlers along the north-west coast of America, is a point that can only be determined by time; but in proportion as the whole coast shall become thickly settled, will the importance of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec be augmented, because it must eventually be the great channel of communication between Europe, the United States, and the north-west coast of America.

The fine rivers we have before mentioned have their sources on the confines, and some of them within the limits, of the United States. The whole of the region lying west of the Rocky Mountains, or Northern Andes, abounds in excellent streams, which discharge themselves into the Pacific, along the coast, or in the Gulf, of California; and consequently, in proportion as the interior of that vast country shall become settled, so will its intercourse with the civilized world, by the route of Tehuantepec, gradually become more important. In fact, it is impossible for the imagination to form any proper conception of the magnitude of the commerce that will pass through the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, when Mexico and South America shall enjoy the blessings of liberal governments.

The Mexican dominions alone are capable of yielding subsistence and comfort to more than treble the present population of all Spanish America. The rapid progress of the United States may serve as an example of the growth of population in new countries blessed by liberal governments. The calculations of Franklin and Jefferson have been fully realized. We more than double our population every twenty-two years; an increase which, regulated by the laws of population, will continue until the surface of our territory shall become as generally cultivated, and as thickly inhabited, as that of Europe and Asia. Give to Mexico the advantages of a good government, open her ports to the commerce of the globe, encourage emigration from all parts of the world, and, in fine, let her pursue the course marked out for her by reason and nature, and she will soon become as flourishing as any part of the New World. We have before remarked the great physical advantages possessed by Mexico, as respects the climate and soil; and we do not believe that there is any part of our globe capable of sustaining a greater population upon the same space of territory. We therefore do not doubt, that from the day that Mexico takes her rank among the nations of the earth as an independent power, governed by wise and liberal institutions, she will continue to double her numbers every twenty-two years, until the whole of her vast regions be covered with

inhabitants. Let us calculate her probable population, a century hence. Fixing on the year 1825, as the epoch of the commencement of her independence, and supposing her population at that time to be - 7,000,000

In 1847, it will be	14,000,000
1869,	28,000,000
1891,	56,000,000
1913,	112,000,000

We are aware that such calculations would have been deemed visionary, thirty or forty years ago; and that even at present their accuracy may be doubted by many of our readers: but in the minds of those who have noted the increase of population in our own country, and have reflected on the happy and important influence of liberal civil institutions, we feel assured our estimations will not excite surprise nor incredulity. Several enlightened writers of the present day, and, among others, the Abbe de Pradt, admit the correctness of this rate of increase.

Every successive census of the United States displays an increase greater than the calculation alluded to. If, then, by this ratio, our country, a century hence, shall contain *one hundred and forty millions*, and Mexico *one hundred and twelve millions*, of persons, how deeply important will the *Isthmus of Tehuantepec* become to those two nations! To Mexico, in particular, this Isthmus is the great bridge that unites her northern and southern with her eastern and western sections. To the United States, it is not only of high importance as respects the possessions of the republic on the north-west coast, and the great share of the carrying trade that will be secured to our citizens by their enterprise and the superior advantages derived from their proximity to the Mexican Gulf, but because *the maritime superiority of the New World appears destined to remain with the United States.* The vast extent of our coast from Passamaquoddy to the river Sabine, the immense internal navigation of our great rivers, and our fisheries, will ere long employ a greater number of individuals than are engaged in the pursuits of navigation in all Europe. In the event of the United States being engaged in any future war,

that is popular, (and in no other do we hope they will ever be engaged) there can be procured a sufficient number of seamen, from the great sources just mentioned, to man a fleet equal to that of any nation in Europe. We therefore will not only be capable of protecting our future commerce along our coasts, but also of extending that protection to whatever place our enterprise and interests may carry our flag. At a distant period, it is not improbable that some of the great states in South America may possess a respectable marine, but none that will ever vie in strength with the navies of the United States. Mexico can never become a great maritime power. Although her rivers are numerous, and several of them flow through an immense extent of territory, yet, from the great elevation of more than four-fifths of the country, these rivers are not navigable, except for boats of small burthen, to any great distance from the ocean, and consequently the internal navigation will never employ a considerable number of people. On the coast of the Pacific ocean, Mexico has some excellent harbours, and it is possible that at some future period she may have a naval force of some importance in those seas. But along the coast in the Mexican Gulf, the port of Guasacualco is the only one suitable for naval arsenals, or that would afford security to vessels of war. We have before noticed the objections to the port of Vera Cruz; and all the others, from Alvarado to the Sabine, are difficult of entrance, and obstructed by bars. The whole coast of Yucatan is likewise without a single port capable of admitting large vessels. It is therefore obvious, from these important obstacles, that Mexico can never become a maritime rival of the United States in the Mexican Gulf; but, on the contrary, the whole of her future commerce therein must be under the protection and control of the latter; and consequently, it must always be of deep importance to Mexico, to cultivate the amity of, and to seek a political alliance with, the United States. The expediency of this friendly and political bond will be further evident, on viewing the map of the two countries. In examining the delineation of the widest part of the continent, from Monterey, on the coast of New California, to the town of St. Louis, at the confluence of the

Mississippi and Missouri, a distance of about eighteen hundred miles in a direct line, we are struck with admiration at the peculiar manner in which nature has provided, by means of water communications in every direction, for the intercourse of the future inhabitants of those vast regions.

Our topographical knowledge of that section of America is yet imperfect; but we know sufficient to enable us to form some idea of the great advantages that must be reciprocally enjoyed by the inhabitants of Mexico and the United States, when an unrestrained intercourse shall be permitted between them, and when the productions of industry shall be interchanged, through the medium of *internal navigation*, between the two nations. The important river *Del Norte* has its sources in New Mexico, not far distant from the heads of the rivers which flow to the Pacific ocean; and empties into the Mexican Gulf, about 25° 50′ north latitude. Descending through a mountainous country, it is in many places extremely rapid, and hence it is usually called *El Rio Bravo;* but it is nevertheless navigable for boats from its mouth nearly to its source. The *Red River*, and the *Arkansa*, have their heads near the source of Del Norte. In the course of these rivers to the Mississippi, they receive the tribute of innumerable smaller streams. *The Kanzas*, and the *Platte*, which empty into the Missouri, have their origin in the same mountains that give birth to Del Norte. Throughout the whole of this country, whether among its lofty mountains or extensive prairies, the traveller can scarcely proceed five leagues, without meeting a stream capable of boat navigation. The navigation of the Mexican rivers, for the reasons we have before assigned, will never employ large vessels: they will, however, greatly facilitate the intercourse between the respective interior provinces. But the great rivers that discharge themselves into the Missouri and Mississippi, some of which we have named, are destined to afford employment to many hundred thousands of persons, in vessels of all sizes.

When we reflect that the great country we have thus briefly glanced at, is throughout its whole extent susceptible of high

cultivation, the greater part of it enjoying a climate equal to any on earth, it is not within the reach of the most ardent fancy to draw a sketch of its future importance; nor can we form an estimate, with strict accuracy, of the millions of human beings which at some future day are to find subsistence and comfort in those regions. The population of the United States is rapidly rolling towards the Mexican settlements. Already have the banks of the Red River, the Arkansa, and the Missouri, become the residence of American citizens. The arts, the sciences, and, if we may use the expression, the blessings of rational liberty, are spreading in that direction. Territorial limits present but feeble barriers against the diffusion of light and knowledge. Their progress cannot be impeded by edicts of the present or of any future government in Mexico. The Mexican on one bank of a river, living in wretchedness and smarting under oppression, cannot long remain blind and insensible to the advantages and happiness of the citizens of the United States on the opposite bank.

From this brief outline of the topography of Mexico and the adjoining territory of the United States, some faint idea may be formed of the vast internal commerce that is to take place between the two nations, as population shall increase, and restrictions upon their intercourse be removed. How many articles will be raised from the soil of the two countries, that are at present scarcely thought of! How many manufactories will be established, in regions calculated to produce all the raw materials for the mechanic and artist! Is it because the two countries may cultivate the same products, and establish the same kind of manufactories, that some writers have broached the opinion that the future commerce between the United States and Mexico will be unimportant? Might they not as well argue, that because wheat is raised in Kentucky, it is injurious to the culture of that article in Pennsylvania? or that because certain manufactories are established at Pittsburg, they are rivals to those of the same class at Boston? Do we not see, that in proportion as population spreads over a country, the consumption of the products of the soil is augmented?

and that human industry receives a new stimulus from a thousand artificial wants that are created in society as they increase in numbers and opulence?

Is it possible, that in the nineteenth century, we have heard the ambassador of a civilized nation stating in a formal diplomatic communication to the government of the United States, that they ought to oppose the extension of the blessings of freedom and commerce to Mexico, because wheat, and other staples of the United States could be raised with greater facility in that country, and because its superior climate would invite the emigration of our citizens, and thereby diminish our strength? These were the sentiments, openly and officially avowed, of the Chevalier Onis. He did not scruple to recommend these abominable and antisocial principles to the serious consideration of our cabinet; and, what is still more extraordinary and disgraceful, the same doctrine has found abettors in some American writers, who have endeavoured to prove that *the independence of Mexico would be injurious to the commercial interests of the United States.*

We humbly conceive that the sketch we have given of the advantages which our country will derive from Mexico's being under a liberal government, is a mode of refutation to the principles advanced by the Chevalier Onis and his partisans, as unanswerable as it must be grateful to every American citizen, who feels, as we do, the absurdity and iniquity of sacrificing the happiness of millions of the human race, at the shrine of political ambition and mercantile calculation. We conceive that the independence of Mexico will be an event next in importance, to the whole civilized world, to that of the declaration of the independence of the United States, on the 4th of July, 1776; and to promote such an event, by every fair and honourable means, is in unison with the wishes and interests of all classes of our fellow-citizens.

It is possible that Spain may, for a few years longer, endeavour to preserve her tottering sovereignty over Mexico, but even admitting that her sway should continue longer than we anticipate, it will be of little or no use to her, because her moral as well as physical supremacy is no longer felt, nor can

ever again be exercised over her former subjects in that kingdom. She can no more expect to find obedience and respect among the Mexican Creoles and Indians, than she can compel the waves of the ocean to subside, when agitated by the winds; but even admitting that it is still possible for Spain to resubjugate the Mexicans, may we not ask how is she to preserve her empire there, in the event of a war with Great Britain, the United States, or any other maritime nation? Have we not proved that on the fidelity of her American subjects she can no longer place any reliance, even for a moment? Where are her fleets to protect her commerce with Mexico, or to prevent its being invaded by an enemy in every direction, as well on the Atlantic as on the Pacific coast? If, then, during peace with all nations, Spain finds it difficult to preserve Mexico, and to repress the revolutionary spirit of the people;—if, during war, she is exposed to have Mexico torn from her by conquest, where is the policy of exhausting the blood and treasure of the inhabitants of Spain, to maintain a sovereignty over an empire liable every instant to break from her grasp? If these observations are applicable to the relative situation of Spain with Mexico, and indeed with all her possessions on the American continent, do they not apply with still greater force to the islands of Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippines? Will the most prejudiced Spaniard undertake to say, that those great islands can be held by a nation without a maritime force? Of what use are their vast fortifications and garrisons, against a rigorous blockade? Let us examine the present state of the important island of Cuba, in order to demonstrate the precarious tenure of Spanish sovereignty in that island.

The port of Havana has been very justly called the greatest maritime key in the West Indies, inasmuch as its position gives it a control not only of the immense commerce at present existing, but of all the indefinite future trade of the vast countries lying between the Isthmus of Panama and Florida; for, by the laws of nature, the whole of such trade must pass from those regions by the route between the Cuba and Florida shores. Fast-sailing vessels, it is true, may occasionally beat

up from Jamaica and from the Isthmus of Panama, so as to pass between Cuba and St. Domingo, but rapid currents, and the trade winds, will compel the great body of commerce to be carried on by the passage through the Gulf; it is therefore undeniable, that Havana is a key of the highest maritime consequence in the Western World; a key that can lock and unlock at pleasure the commerce alluded to, and more especially that of Mexico. Indeed it is not saying too much to assert, that the political and commercial destinies of the Mexican empire must be very materially influenced by the conduct of that power which holds the port of Havana. How long the island of Cuba will continue under Spanish banners, whether it will be seized by Great Britain by force, or be obtained by her through negotiation, or whether the people of Cuba will declare their independence, are all-important questions to the civilized world, and to the United States deeply interesting.

Within a few years past, the British Journals have teemed with essays, tending to prove, not merely the great commercial benefits that will arise to Great Britain from possessing Cuba, but also that its possession is absolutely necessary, as well for the security of the British West India commerce, as to repress the growing power of the United States. However extravagant many of the opinions contained in those essays may be, and however marked with illiberal and hostile features towards the United States, yet they are so flattering to the domineering spirit of the British nation, that we should not be surprised to see them realized by the British cabinet, on the first opportune occasion.

Should Great Britain get possession of the island of Cuba, it would no doubt be in her power to retain it for a long time; and by the establishment of extensive arsenals at the port of Havana, she would likewise be able to keep there an immense fleet; so that, in the event of a war with the United States, the vast commerce of the river Mississippi, and that of all the Mexican Gulf, would be seriously annoyed, and perhaps entirely suspended. All this we admit; but nevertheless we do not hesitate to predict, that in less than half a century hence, when the United States will have a population exceeding *forty*

millions, and a naval force, such as the extent of their maritime resources will then enable them to maintain, the island of Cuba, as well as all the Antilles, and the commerce of the Mexican Gulf, will be under the control of the republic. This idea does not spring from any ill will towards other nations, but is merely a hint to the governments of the Old World, that their establishments in the New are limited to a short duration, and that every new attempt, whether on the part of Great Britain or any other nation, to oppose the natural and inevitable progress of the United States, by planting *rival posts* either on the continent or islands adjacent, will only tend to an earlier development of our resources, and consequently will accelerate the epoch when the power of our republic will be felt and acknowledged over the western hemisphere.

East and West Florida must be incorporated in our federative states, either by *treaty* or *conquest*. We have already experienced the fatal consequences of permitting that section of the continent to be held by nations hostile to our interests and jealous of our prosperity. Our citizens on the frontiers of Georgia and Louisiana, must no longer be exposed to invasion and massacre, in consequence of the impotence and dispositions of a neutral power in the Floridas. The security of the vast commerce of the Mississippi, and the prosperity of our great western states, must not be jeopardised by allowing any foreign nation to possess the important maritime keys of East and West Florida.

If Great Britain should hoist her royal banners at Havana, and make it the depot of her navy, and the Gibraltar of the West Indies, we must then make *Pensacola* and *Espiritu Santo* our two great *southern arsenals;* and if we are to become rivals for supremacy on the western shores of the Atlantic, then be it so.

Before we close our remarks on this important subject, we deem it necessary to say a few words on the probability that Cuba will not remain long under any foreign flag, but will become an independent power, under the protection of the United States. We know that this is the *wish*, and we are likewise certain that it is the *interest* of the people of that island,

It has not escaped the penetration of all the enlightened inhabitants of Cuba, that Spain cannot protect them during war, and consequently they know that every war in which she may in future be engaged, exposes them not only to have their commerce destroyed, but to invasion and conquest. Under these circumstances, independent of all political enmity to the government of Spain, the inhabitants of Cuba have no common interests with her. The products of the island are valuable in proportion as they can, without restriction, be sent to every part of the world; and the articles necessary for the subsistence and comfort of the inhabitants cannot be supplied from Spain, and therefore must be furnished by other nations.

The city of Havana and its environs, at this day consume more flour and provisions, of the growth of the United States, than Jamaica, or any other island in the West Indies. *One hundred and twenty thousand barrels of flour, besides an immense quantity of other provisions*, are now annually carried to Havana from the United States.

The enormous influx of negroes into the island of Cuba within the last few years, and the inattention of the planters to the culture of provisions, have rendered the island completely dependent on foreign supplies for the subsistence of the inhabitants. Suspend all commerce with Havana, by a strict blockade of its port, for only four or five months, and the city with all its famous fortifications would be compelled to surrender, without firing a gun.

The United States at present have a greater tonnage employed in the trade to the island of Cuba, than to all the rest of the West India islands. From our proximity, as well as the enterprise of our citizens, and more especially from our being the great source from which must be derived flour and other provisions, we must always enjoy a considerable portion of its commerce. If it become independent, we shall be perfectly satisfied with such portion of the trade as will fall to our lot from the circumstances just suggested. We shall feel pleasure in beholding the island in the enjoyment of an intercourse with all nations, giving to none any exclusive privileges.

We do not hesitate to declare our wishes for the independence of Cuba; because, as we know that Spain cannot possibly long retain it, without a navy, we certainly would rather see the island under a self-constituted government, than to behold it under the domination of a European power, jealous of our prosperity, and capable of seriously annoying the commerce of our coasts.

But it is to Mexico that we turn, and turn again, with fond delight. We invoke the reader to ponder what we have written of her present situation, of her capacity for future greatness, and of the career that she has yet to commence and run. For ourselves, we disguise not our admiration of her, we conceal not our affection for her. We have visited her, and we have found her sons our friends, our admirers, our disciples. We look towards her, and we see the day-spring of a glorious national existence arising within her bounds: and vain will be the effort to obscure its light. It *will* lead her in the path of success. If cast down, Antæus like she will rise again—if overpowered, her throes and struggles will convulse her territory. Mexico will, she must be free. For the seeds of independence have already been scattered there upon the mountain and in the vale: they are now germinating;—they *will* strike deep roots into the earth, for they are watered with the tears of oppressed millions;—they *will* flourish till their strength shall laugh to scorn the fiercest blast of opposition; and then, beneath the serene and cloudless sky of liberty, they will grow a beauteous grove, whose shade shall refresh no heads but those of FREEMEN.

THE END.

APPENDIX.

STATEMENT

OF

THE CLAIMS OF W. D. ROBINSON

UPON

THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT.

IN the year 1799, I visited the city of Caracas as a merchant, and presented letters of introduction to *Don Manuel Guevara de Vazconcelos*, captain general of Venezuela, and to *Don Estevan Fernandez de Leon*, intendant thereof. They received me in the most friendly manner, and each offered me his assistance and protection so long as it suited my convenience to remain in the country.

At that period, the province of Venezuela was in a most deplorable condition. War existed between Great Britain and Spain; British cruisers blockaded all the ports; and intercourse with the mother country was almost wholly suspended. The inhabitants were deficient in clothing, and in many of the necessaries of life; the products of agriculture were rotting in the ware-houses; in fine, the want of external commerce had spread wretchedness and discontent through the province.

The intendant, knowing that I was a citizen of the United States, and judging, from the respectable manner in which I had been introduced to him, that I might be able to suggest some plan, by which, through the medium of neutral commerce, the evils which so seriously oppressed the province might be remedied, treated me with particular confidence; and, after various conferences, proposed to sell me *forty thousand quintals of Varinas tobacco, belonging to the crown of Spain*, then deposited,

as he stated, in the royal stores in various parts of the province. Many advantageous privileges, and flattering inducements to make the purchase, were held out to me by the intendant, provided that I would engage to introduce into Venezuela, in a short time, certain articles which were then indispensably necessary for its welfare.

The magnitude of the undertaking, and the difficulty of executing it during the war then existing between England and Spain, were deliberately weighed; but, as I had commercial connexions upon whose assistance I could confidently depend, I resolved on embarking in the speculation; and accordingly, after several verbal and written discussions between myself and the intendant, all the essential and preparatory points being settled, on the 5th of September, 1799, *a contract was signed, by which the intendant, in the name and by virtue of the special authority of his Catholic majesty, sold me the whole of the Varinas tobacco then in the province, as well as the crops of the three following years.* On my part, I was bound to pay for, and export, this tobacco within three years, in the mode prescribed by the stipulations of the contract. I was likewise bound to procure the house of the American consul at Curacoa, trading under the firm of *Phillips & Corser*, to become my securities for the due execution of the contract. This security was duly given, and the said house of Phillips & Corser likewise became parties interested in the contract.

The privileges secured to me, by the stipulated terms, were more ample than any that had ever before been conceded to a foreigner. The jealousy of the Spanish merchants at Caracas was therefore excited. Although these men were absolutely incapable of relieving the wants of the province, or his Catholic majesty's treasury, yet their selfish and contracted dispositions would not allow them to view without discontent the probability that a foreigner might reap advantage from so extensive a commercial speculation. They adopted every possible expedient, through their agents at Cadiz, to prevent the contract from receiving the royal sanction. But their exertions were ineffectual; for, in a few months, the ratification of the contract by his Catholic majesty was transmitted to the intendant; who was directed, at the same time, to afford me every possible facility in the execution of the same.

Another obstacle to the completion of the contract was created by the marquis *Casa Yrujo*, then ambassador of Spain in the United States. The marquis had received letters, a long time previous to the formation of the contract into which I entered, from the intendant of Caracas, requesting him to take *preliminary measures* with the merchants in the United States, relative to the disposal of the aforesaid tobacco; but reserving the ratification of those measures until they should receive his approbation. The marquis, in his zeal to promote the interests of his Catholic majesty, entered into *absolute contracts* with the houses of John Craig of Philadelphia, and James Barry of Baltimore, in the month of July, 1799; and with the house of John Juhel & Co. of New York, in the month of August of the same year; whereby the tobacco was to be taken from Caracas to the United States, and thence to Holland and Hamburgh, *on account of the Spanish government, but to be covered as American property.* The correspondence on that subject between the marquis Casa Yrujo and the intendant of Caracas, and the contracts formed by the marquis with the houses before mentioned, were furnished me at Caracas, and I now possess authentic copies of all those singular documents. Without troubling the reader with a detailed account of these papers, I deem it necessary to observe, that from the conditions of the contracts, his Catholic majesty would have received *far less than one hundred thousand dollars* neat proceeds from the same quantity of tobacco for which I have paid *upwards of eight hundred thousand dollars* into his treasury. This will not appear extraordinary to the mercantile world, when I state, that according to the marquis's contracts, the houses before mentioned were to receive as high as *twelve dollars*, and in no instance less than *ten and a half dollars* freight per barrel, for carrying this tobacco from Caracas to Europe. Insurance was to be effected on the property, and charged to the account of his Catholic majesty. Commissions were likewise to be allowed these houses, on the arrival of the tobacco in the United States; and commissions were to be paid to the agents sent out to Caracas to receive the tobacco. Certain privileges were also granted to the vessels employed in this business; and, in short, *the whole of his Catholic majesty's tobacco would scarcely have sufficed to pay the freight and other charges, which the marquis had generously guarantied in his contracts.*

In virtue of these strange arrangements, the before mentioned American houses actually despatched several ships and brigs to La Guyra, where they arrived just as I had concluded the contract with the intendant. Although the intendant at once perceived the very great difference in favour of the royal treasury between the engagements he had entered into with me, and those which the marquis had formed,—notwithstanding that personage had undertaken to make positive engagements without waiting for the intendant's approbation, yet it was with difficulty that I could persuade him to declare null and void the whole of the marquis's contracts. I understand that the marquis made loud complaints to his court, accompanied by heavy demands on the part of the individuals with whom he had contracted.

Having surmounted these obstacles which had arisen in the early stages of the business, and having delivered to the intendant, in the latter part of the year 1799 and in the beginning of 1800, a considerable amount in those articles most needed by the province, I proceeded to the United States, and thence to London, Hamburgh, and Amsterdam, in order to make the necessary arrangements for the speedy fulfilment of my engagements.

Having introductory letters to some respectable capitalists of those cities, and as the contract itself was a document calculated to command particular attention, from the circumstance of the good faith of the Spanish government being solemnly pledged to its faithful execution, I found no difficulty in obtaining the necessary capital. The house of John & Abram Atkins, of London, furnished two ships, with valuable cargoes, on the faith of the contract. Other houses, at Hamburgh, Amsterdam, and Embden, likewise furnished cargoes to a great amount. Several houses in the United States also entered into similar arrangements with me.

The whole of this property was faithfully delivered, in the course of three or four years, to the royal treasury at Caracas; the amount of which was nearly *nine hundred thousand dollars*, as is proved by the account current rendered me by the ministers of the tobacco department in 1803, and by other official documents now in my possession. The merchandise thus delivered consisted of the choicest articles that had ever been introduced into Spanish America; and the prices stipulated in the contract for said merchandise were so moderate as to enable the intendant to sell them to the inhabitants of the province at an immense

profit. For the sale of these goods, the intendant appointed administrators, auditors, treasurers, &c.; in fact, he created a new department, under his sole patronage. But notwithstanding that all these individuals employed therein did not lose sight of their own interests, yet the ultimate profit, accruing to the royal treasury, was very great.

While the revenue was thus in the receipt of above a million of dollars, and while the intendant was laying a foundation at court for future promotion and honours in recompense for the great services he had rendered his Catholic majesty's treasury, the tobacco contractors, and the foreign merchants who had so liberally supported them, became victims to his rapacity, ambition, and bad faith. Were the various instances of exaction and injustice practised by this man to be related, they would scarcely be deemed credible; but as I have all the documents necessary to establish the facts, I shall, at some future time, publish the extraordinary detail, in order that the mercantile world may see what acts of baseness can be perpetrated by the royal authorities in Spanish America, when foreign property unfortunately falls within their grasp.

There is, however, one circumstance in this business so peculiarly stamped with iniquity, that I will here briefly state it. It was mentioned in the contract, that *some* part of the forty thousand quintals of tobacco was partially injured by worms, but nevertheless I was to receive it, provided it was in a *merchantable state*. It was, however, expressly stipulated that the whole of the tobacco should be of *good quality*, (buena calidad,) and it was with that view that I procured an article to be inserted which required that I should be furnished with the crops of the three years following the date of the contract, so as to complete the quantity of forty thousand quintals of "buena calidad." Indeed, when forming the contract, the idea never presented itself to my mind, that in a solemn engagement, for the performance of which the good faith and honour of a nation were pledged, *rotten tobacco* would be offered me in payment for so large an amount of money furnished to the royal treasury: but, to my utter astonishment, and to the ruin of myself and associates, such was the disgraceful fact; for when my agents at Porto Cavello, at La Guyra, at Cumana, and at Guyana, received the tobacco, they found more than *four-fifths* of it, not in a state of partial deterioration, but *absolutely*

rotten and unmerchantable. So soon as I was made acquainted with the fact, I entered a legal protest, and resisted the receipt of the worthless commodity. I remonstrated in strong terms with the intendant, and prayed he would pay me in some other produce of the country. My remonstrances were either disregarded, or, if answered, it was to inform me that *my language was too strong;* that his Catholic majesty's authorities must be addressed by *supplication!* and, finally, I was informed, that *it was not convenient for the royal treasury to pay me in any other commodity than in the tobacco then existing, and that I must receive the whole of it, in whatever condition it might be found.* If my previous remonstrances were deemed too strong, they were now called *insulting*, because, unable longer to restrain my indignation at such outrageous injustice, I did not hesitate to accuse the intendant of palpably fraudulent conduct. He continued to menace me, while I persevered in my accusations, until finally I commenced against him and his government a judicial process, under all the disadvantages and obstacles naturally attending the claim of a foreigner placed in such a dilemma in Spanish America.

While this lawsuit was progressing, I endeavoured to prevail on the supercargoes, captains, and agents, not to receive any of the rotten tobacco, but to return to England and to the United States with the contract vessels in ballast. In some instances, my wishes were acceded to, and the vessels departed without lading, after making the proper protests: but generally the parties preferred taking cargoes of the tobacco, in the hope that some portion of it would be saleable in Europe. The result was (as I had anticipated) that several of those cargoes sold at Hamburgh and Amsterdam for less than was sufficient to defray the expenses of freight and other incidental charges. The original capital furnished by the parties in Europe was not only all lost, but in some cases that loss was increased by the expenses, amounting to more than the proceeds of the tobacco.

Thus were my associates and myself sacrificed: my credit was destroyed,—my prospects in life were blasted, and those who had confided in the honour of the Spanish government, and in my representations, seriously injured or entirely ruined, by the bad faith and iniquitous conduct of Don Estevan Fernandez de Leon, superintendant general of his Catholic majesty's province of Venezuela.

It is not easy to estimate the extent of such injuries, not merely as they affect the immediate interests of individuals, but in regard to the irreparable wounds they inflict on mercantile character; and it is in this latter point of view that the parties concerned can receive no adequate redress, even should the Spanish government refund every dollar of principal and interest which it has so unjustly and shamefully withheld for eighteen years.

To the preceding outline of the injuries received by me from the Spanish government up to the period at which I commenced legal proceedings against the intendant, I have now to detail outrages of a more flagrant nature, exercised towards my person as well as my interests.

In prosecuting the lawsuit, I was impeded at every step by obstacles almost insurmountable. To those who are unacquainted with the formalities attending a Spanish lawsuit, the arbitrary character of Spanish tribunals, and the enormous expenses of Spanish litigation, it is scarcely possible to convey an adequate idea of the difficulty of the task I had undertaken. It was necessary not only to contend against the intendant and the officers in the tobacco department, but against the whole phalanx of individuals within the sphere of their influence. My rightful demands were not only opposed by sophistry and falsehood, but I was even threatened with expulsion from the country if I persisted in urging them. These threats were treated with scorn; and indeed, as I had been ruined in my interests, I was indifferent to personal outrage; more especially as I knew that the execution of such menaces would strengthen my case, when it should become necessary for me to implore the protection and interference of my government. I was perfectly aware, that by the treaty then existing between Spain and the United States, my rights were under its guardianship; and had I not produced a copy of that treaty, and insisted on the benefit of those stipulations whereby the courts of the respective nations were thrown open to the subjects of each, in all cases of debt, demand, &c., I should certainly have been ordered out of the country. But the intendant thenceforth became more cautious; and, although at first he denied the existence of the treaty, alleging that the copy I presented was not genuine, yet he subsequently admitted its authenticity, and I was permitted to proceed with my suit against the royal treasury.

But the most important difficulty I had to contend against was a decree of the intendant, whereby he refused to admit in evidence any memorial or document relating to my demands, unless it was sanctioned by the signature of some respectable lawyer of the city. Some of those professional men declined affixing their names to my representations, because the arguments therein used, and the documents annexed, contained truths *fatal to the honour and reputation of the intendant, and injurious to the interests of the royal revenue.* They in general trembled at the idea of incurring the intendant's displeasure: but at length I succeeded in inducing some of the most distinguished lawyers in Caracas to examine my papers and to espouse my cause, particularly *Doctor Don José Mora*, a man renowned for his talents. My principal memorial in this affair, which was drawn up by doctor Mora with great ability, and accompanied by all the proper documents, cost me the sum of *one thousand dollars* for his signature, as is proved by examining his charges at the foot of the memorial.

The representation in question was presented, with every legal requisite, to the intendant, on the 17th of January, 1804. The amount of my claims, for the violation of the contract, against the royal treasury, thus legally stated by doctor Mora, was *five hundred and sixty-four thousand three hundred and twenty-seven dollars.* In my own statement, which I had previously presented, on the 24th of September, 1803, to the intendant, my demand for balance of account and losses amounted to four hundred and sixty-four thousand two hundred dollars; but doctor Mora augmented the sum by charging interest and damages, which I had omitted, and which, indeed, I would even then have very cheerfully relinquished, could I have been reimbursed the principal.

The reimbursement of a sum of such magnitude was not to be expected without a serious contest, more especially as it would have been an acknowledgment on the part of the Spanish authorities, of their previous fraudulent conduct; but nevertheless, neither the tribunal of the intendancy, the director general of the tobacco rents, nor the administrators of that department, ever attempted legally to invalidate a single item in the account presented, annexed to doctor Mora's memorial. All they had to say, consisted in denouncing vengeance against the doctor, for

having dared to sustain the demands of a stranger against the interests of the crown, and threatening me with expulsion from the country if I persisted in the lawsuit. I persevered, however, with an obstinacy which excited their alarm as well as displeasure, because I was gradually obtaining new proofs to sustain my original demands.

In the course of the year 1803, there arrived at Caracas a new intendant, to take the place of Don Estevan Fernandez de Leon, who was called to Madrid. This was a fortunate circumstance for me, because, had De Leon remained in office, I never could have obtained either originals or copies of various documents, which were important for the establishment of my claims; but the new intendant, with a liberality (which I now feel great pleasure in stating) rarely to be met with among the Spanish authorities in America, gave an attentive ear to my remonstrances, and furnished me with authentic copies, from the archives of the intendancy, of such papers as I solicited. He did not attempt to defend the conduct of his predecessor, but, on the contrary, so well convinced was he of the force and equity of my demands, and so sensible of the injuries I had received in my various transactions with his government, that while I was prosecuting my lawsuit he showed every disposition to render me justice, consistent with his duty to defend the interests of his sovereign.

Thus has the reader been presented with an account of but part of the accumulated and aggravated injuries which I received from the Spanish authorities in Venezuela. The recital ends not here. Indeed it would seem that to enter into engagements with the Spanish government, was, as far as concerned myself, to become the victim of its perfidiousness and injustice. For, during the period when I was carrying on the operations of the tobacco contract, I was appointed by Edward Barry and Company, of the island of Trinidad, their sole agent to execute certain important privileges which had been granted to them by the crown of Spain. This agency was of high importance to me, inasmuch as I became a partner with the said Barry and Company; and having suffered so seriously by the tobacco contract, and being uncertain as to the species of redress that would be ultimately afforded by his Catholic majesty for the losses and injuries I had sustained, I was anxious to adopt any new operations in commerce that afforded a prospect of lessening my misfortunes.

Previous to the arrival of the intendant Arce, the government had recognised me as the agent of Barry and Company, and I was in a fair way of speedily retrieving some part of my recent losses. But between the captain general and intendant there arose conflicting opinions about my residence in the country, and whether or not, as a stranger, I could enjoy the privileges which the king had granted to Edward Barry and Company. The result of the disputes between the two officers, was a suspension of Barry and Company's contract, until his Catholic majesty should be consulted; of course all the arrangements I had made to carry said contract into effect, were suddenly interrupted, thereby creating serious losses, and affording me new grounds of demands against the government, in addition to those which were pending on account of the tobacco contract.

On the 19th of September, 1803, I presented a memorial to the intendant, setting forth the injuries that would inevitably result to my interests and character, by the unjust and extraordinary decrees of the captain general, as well as those of the intendancy; and I demanded the immediate revocation of those decrees, or an indemnification for the losses I had sustained. The intendant and his assesor (legal adviser) were so well satisfied of the correctness of the facts set forth in the memorial just mentioned, and being desirous not to give me any new motives of complaint, that they promptly determined to grant me a liberal indemnity, and accordingly, on the 9th of November, 1803, the intendant passed a decree granting me some highly important privileges, particularly specifying that such privileges were granted me as an *indemnification* for the injuries I had sustained by the suspension of Barry and Company's contract. This indemnity had no relation to my pending demands on account of the tobacco contract; but as I feared it might hereafter be interpreted as a relinquishment of my claims, I requested and obtained from the intendant an express declaration to the contrary.

The most important point in this indemnity was, that the intendant agreed to sell me a large quantity of tobacco, at *five dollars per quintal*, in consequence of its being of *inferior quality*. This tobacco was exactly of the *same quality* as that which the intendant De Leon had compelled me to receive on account of the tobacco contract, at the rate of *seventeen*, *nineteen*, and *twenty dollars per quintal*, and indeed a large portion of that very to-

bacco which I had rejected, constituted a part of the present sale. I had then an indisputable and solemn *official acknowledgment of its deteriorated condition*, by its being valued by the royal authorities, and resold to me at *five dollars* per quintal.

This act of the new intendant was in itself of more value to me than all the privileges conceded to me in the indemnity in question, because it furnished me with an unequivocal and irresistible proof of *the extent of the fraud* which had been practised upon me by the intendant Leon, in having insisted on my receiving *worm eaten tobacco*, at *seventeen*, *nineteen*, and *twenty dollars*, which was afterwards valued by the tobacco administration at *five dollars* per quintal. This circumstance, united with other considerations, induced me to be highly satisfied with the indemnity, inasmuch as it gave me a hope of not only repairing some of my losses, but of proving to his Catholic majesty and the superior tribunals at Madrid, the services I had rendered to the royal treasury, and the injuries I had suffered by my contract with De Leon.

The captain general made some difficulties about granting his assent to the indemnity, but at length acquiesced, and transmitted the necessary orders to all the commandants of the different ports in Venezuela, to throw no impediment in my way, at the same time that he informed the intendant and myself, that he should communicate his objections to his Catholic majesty against allowing any stranger to enjoy such privileges as had been conceded to me by the intendant. As I had suffered severely from the collision of opinion in the Spanish authorities, and as I knew that every species of intrigue would be employed in Caracas, and perhaps in Cadiz, to prevent my enjoying the fruits of the indemnity, I resolved on acting with caution in my mercantile arrangements, until I ascertained whether his Catholic majesty sanctioned or rejected the arrangement which the intendant had made.

On the 25th of August, 1804, the indemnity in question received the royal approbation, and the minister Soler, under that date, transmitted the *royal order* to the intendant. On the arrival of this important document at Caracas, it was immediately communicated to me officially, by the intendant. I was thus inspired with new confidence, and made my arrangements accordingly.

Scarcely had I begun to carry into effect this flattering indem-

nity, when I again became a victim to new outrages, not only against my interests, but my person.

On the 29th of August, 1805, the captain general communicated his determination to the intendant, not to permit the execution of the indemnity which had been conceded to me, alleging that he had *(ordenes reservados) secret orders* from his court, which justified this extraordinary determination. The intendant, in a firm and indignant manner, opposed this resolution, and stated to the captain general the serious consequences that would follow to the injury of a stranger, who had rendered important services to the Spanish government, and already had heavy pending claims upon the royal treasury, and he urged the consideration, that as his Catholic majesty had given express orders for the strict fulfilment of the indemnity conceded to me, it would endanger the honour and good faith of the king, to violate engagements which had been thus solemnly entered into. In vain the intendant protested against the arbitrary conduct of the captain general, and in vain I implored the latter at least to permit me to pursue my operations under the indemnity, until we heard further from his Catholic majesty. To all these just remonstrances and petitions he was deaf, and in fact issued orders to the commandants of the ports not to permit a single vessel to enter under my contract. Thus far the captain general's arbitrary and unjust measures affected only my interests, but on the 7th of January, 1806, he issued a decree commanding me to leave the province immediately. On receiving notice of this decree, I waited on his excellency, and requested him to state to me his reasons for thus precipitately expelling me from the country. He replied, that he did not feel himself at liberty to state any reasons, further than his having received orders from the Prince of Peace to send away every foreigner, without any exception, from the Spanish dominions under his control. I asked him if he had any special orders respecting me? He replied, No; but that he conceived me to be included in the general instructions he had received. He permitted me to enter into a friendly expostulation with him, wherein I endeavoured to convince him that it was impossible that his Catholic majesty could have intended to comprehend me in the orders which had been transmitted by the Prince of Peace, more especially as my residence in Caracas had

been specially sanctioned by his majesty's approbation. I urged upon his attention all the services I had rendered his government, and the serious claims I had then pending. He replied, with great urbanity, that he was perfectly sensible of the force of all I said, and professed to be sincerely sorry for the peculiar hardships of my case, but that if I suffered in my interests, the door was always open for me to obtain redress, through the honour and justice of his sovereign; and whatever might be the consequences, he had made up his mind to compel me to depart from the country, and particularly as he had reason to doubt *whether I was a citizen of the United States or not.* On his making this remark, I replied that it was in my power to furnish him with undeniable evidence of my being a native of the United States; that, in particular, in all the public documents, since the year 1799, when I first entered the province, I had been recognised as a citizen of the United States; and that, in virtue of being such, the intendant De Leon had entered into a contract with me, during the late war between Great Britain and Spain. He then replied, with a good deal of petulance, "*Well, it may be so, but as you cannot pursue your commercial operations but by an intercourse with English subjects, it is dangerous to his Catholic majesty's interests that you should remain here, therefore you must depart.*" I attempted to repel this ungenerous and unfounded suspicion, by showing that the disputes with Spain and Great Britain ought not to endanger my interests and personal rights as a citizen of the United States; and I further stated, that even if a war were declared between Spain and my own country, there was *a special provision in a treaty existing between the two nations, whereby the respective subjects and citizens of each should be allowed one year from the date of a declaration of war, to remove their persons and effects from the respective dominions of either power;* and of course that it was cruel to place me in a worse predicament, in consequence of hostilities with Great Britain, than I should have been in even in the event of a war between Spain and the United States. To all these arguments and expostulations his excellency finally answered, "You must depart; and if you do not immediately acquiesce, you shall be expelled the country by force."

I then requested, as a favour, that I might be permitted to present a memorial to him, which should embrace the same argu-

ments I had verbally stated, as I wished to possess some document to prove that I had in due season represented for his consideration what I deemed necessary in defence of my interests and personal rights; and I likewise desired, that should he decree any thing with respect to said memorial, that he would furnish me with an authentic copy of such decree. His excellency hesitated for a few minutes, but at length said that he would comply with my wishes, provided the memorial were presented the next day. Availing myself of this permission, I delayed presenting my representation until I should again hear from his excellency, hoping to collect all my papers together in the meantime, and to make the best arrangements in my power preparatory to my expulsion from the country.

On the 18th of January, 1806, I laid my memorial before the captain general, which caused him to hesitate for several days before he finally determined to use forcible means to compel my departure, as I had solemnly declared that nothing but force should induce me to abandon my interests. He consulted the tribunal of the *real audiencia*, and some of the most distinguished lawyers of Caracas, on the subject. Some of them advised him to take no decisive steps until he should receive further instructions from Madrid; others counselled him to expel me without hesitation; while some of the merchants in Caracas, who had always been hostile to my views, endeavoured to persuade him that my mercantile connexions with British subjects were dangerous to the safety of the province.

On the 16th of February, the captain general sent his adjutant to inform me that I must depart for La Guyra, and embark in the first vessel that should leave that port. I requested the adjutant to inform his excellency that I still adhered to my resolution of remaining in the country until compulsion should force me to quit it. A few hours subsequently, I called on the captain general, who received me with his usual urbanity. With great good humour, the old gentleman shook me by the hand, wished me a pleasant voyage, and informed me that a military escort was then at the door, with orders to conduct me to La Guyra. I requested permission to return with his adjutant to my place of residence, in order that I might procure my clothes and papers; which he granted. After having collected my papers, the adjutant insisted that I should return with him to the captain general, in order to

submit them to his inspection. I accordingly complied; but his excellency declined making such examination, and censured his officer for having suggested the idea. The last words he said to me were; "I regret, sir, that the orders which I have received from the Prince of Peace have compelled me to expel you from the province under my command; but I thank you, in the name of my sovereign, for the services you have rendered our government, and the inhabitants of Venezuela, during the time you have been among us." I bade his excellency adieu, and proceeded to La Guyra, accompanied by the adjutant and a guard.

On the 21st of February, the commandant of La Guyra sent a notary to acquaint me that a Danish schooner, called the Maria, was to sail the next day for St. Thomas's, and that if I did not voluntarily embark in said vessel, he had orders from the captain general to adopt compulsory measures. I answered, that I would not embark in the schooner, nor in any other vessel, but by compulsion. Accordingly, on the following day, (February 22, 1806,) I was conducted to the wharf by a military guard, attended by notaries, and a cavalcade of officers and inhabitants. The officer ordered me into the boat, and continued with me until he saw me on board the schooner, and the vessel under sail.

Thus was I forcibly expelled from his Catholic majesty's province of Venezuela, after having rendered the services to the royal treasury and to the country, before stated. And thus was the suit then pending for the violation of my tobacco contract, at once cut short; while the indemnity itself, granted for injuries done to me, became of none effect.

A few hours previous to my embarcation, I entered a solemn protest against the proceedings of the captain general, his government, and all those who were in any way concerned in these outrages on my interests and person.

The papers which I succeeded in taking away with me, were as follows: *Copy of the protest at La Guyra; original contracts respecting the Varinas tobacco; my correspondence with the intendant, and with the captain general; notarial copies of the proceedings in the suit against the royal treasury; indemnity granted me by the intendant; royal order of his Catholic majesty, approving of that indemnity; powers of attorney from, and agreement with Edward Barry and Company, of the island of Trinidad; decrees of the captain general and intendant, autho-*

rizing me to execute the privileges granted by his Catholic majesty to the said Edward Barry and Company; subsequent decrees of the captain general, suspending and violating his previous decrees; proofs of the amount of property delivered by me to the royal treasury, on the faith of my first contract for forty thousand quintals of tobacco; unquestionable proofs that the intendant De Leon, at the time that he made the contract, (September 5, 1799,) well knew that the whole of the said tobacco was deteriorated and rotten, thereby committing an enormous and deliberate fraud, compromising the honour of his Catholic majesty, and wantonly ruining those who had unfortunately relied on the good faith of the Spanish government. All these important documents are now in my possession.

Upon my arrival at St. Thomas's, I wrote to the ambassador of the United States at Madrid, transmitting through him a memorial to his Catholic Majesty, setting forth the wrongs I had suffered, accompanied by a notarial copy of the protest I made at La Guyra, on the 21st of February, 1806. I have reason to believe that the memorial was duly presented to the king; and I received information, toward the end of the year 1807, that his Catholic majesty had been pleased to pass a royal order, reprimanding the captain general for his precipitate and unjust conduct towards me, and commanding the intendant, in case I should return to Caracas, to permit me to carry into effect the indemnity which had been granted me.

At the period when this intelligence reached me, my mercantile affairs were so much embarrassed, and my credit had received so severe a shock from the unfortunate issue of my previous transactions with the Spanish government, that it was impossible for me to make any further use of the indemnity in question; and in addition to this, I was so disgusted at the recollection of the perfidy and injury I had already experienced from the Spanish authorities at Caracas, that I felt a repugnance to place my person or interests a second time within the sphere of their power. Under these circumstances, the information respecting the royal order was a matter of indifference to me; and I resolved to proceed to Spain, and lay my case before the superior tribunals at Madrid. But while I was making arrangements for that purpose, the revolution of 1808 broke out in Spain; and the unsettled state of the government for several subsequent years rendered it un-

advisable to make any attempts to prosecute my claim, until the affairs of the kingdom should assume some degree of order and stability. I therefore concluded to let them remain in "statu quo," until the period might arrive when the intervention of my own government should make it expedient to revive the claims.

It is not for me to say, in what manner, if at all, our government ought to interfere; but it is believed that it is not hazarding much to say, that in the long catalogue of injuries received by American citizens from the Spanish government, there does not exist a single case, either in point of magnitude or outrage, as a parallel to the one just detailed, or which, in the humble opinion of the writer, more loudly calls for the protection and investigation of the government of the United States.

It will be clearly perceived, from the foregoing statement, that all my commercial transactions in Venezuela directly emanated from the highest Spanish authorities; that the contracts were made on account of the Spanish government, and, together with the privileges and indemnities conceded to me, were sanctioned by the approval of his Catholic majesty; that all the injuries my interests received, and the outrages exercised against my person, were directly caused by the acts of the Spanish authorities; and, finally, that my forcible expulsion from Caracas, by the despotic conduct of the captain general, was *a manifest infraction of the treaty then existing between Spain and the United States.* An infraction of the treaty! Can an American citizen seek redress from Spain for such a wrong?—or must he not rather look to that benignant power which like a kind parent encircles all its objects within its arms, and feels an outrage committed upon them thrilling its own heart's blood? To my government I do look with confidence; for is it possible that I can obtain reparation from a government that has acted as that of Spain has invariably acted towards all our citizens who for the last twenty-five years have had any claims against it? Has there been a solitary instance, within that time, of compensation being afforded for injury, excepting in the case of our fellow-citizen, Richard W. Meade Esq.? —and even in his case, do we not know that the energetic interference of the American government alone prevented new outrages against his person and interests? These are important facts, known to every one who has paid the least attention to the conduct of the Spanish government towards our citizens, ever

since the period of the violation of the right of trading on the river Mississippi.

Until, therefore, my case shall be honoured with the notice and protection of our government, I cannot hope to obtain reparation for my wrongs. The principal circumstances of the case have long since been made known to the executive of the United States, and to the American ministers at Madrid; but as it is only within a few months past that I obtained possession of the papers and documents before mentioned, (which have been in keeping, in the island of St. Croix, for the last thirteen years,) I have never, until the present moment, been enabled to state the facts with precise accuracy, or to make a representation to our government with due formality, and supported by the proper proofs. Such a representation will now be made; and I flatter myself with the belief that it will be found worthy of the attention and interposition of the government of the United States.

END OF APPENDIX.

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